

TRUCKERS UNITE: OTA chair touts new-age competition, PG. 23

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TANGUAY:
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decisions."



February 2009
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Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

The ABCs of DEF

What you, your mechanics,
your drivers and bookkeepers
have to know about Diesel
Exhaust Fluid, PG. 32

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:



Clever trailer spec'ing **PAGE 36**

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Today's Trucking

The Business Magazine of Canada's Trucking Industry

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**Kenneth R. Wilson
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BIFA WORLDWIDE

Letters

X-rated elections

Re: "It's always darkest before Dion,"
(by Peter Carter, Jan '09)

Your polling-place staff could use some education. You do have an alternative to spoiling a ballot in an effort to exercise your franchise but not vote for any of the lackluster candidates.

You may "decline" the ballot. In the case of a spoiled ballot, the ballot is not counted, but a declined ballot is handed back to the polling attendant and put in a separate envelope and counted. This is an option I have used more often than not, and trust me it always sends the people working there for a loop!

They usually get one or two every election, and they tend to look at you like "there's always one in every crowd, and why did he have to come to my polling station?"

Anyway, keep up the good work, and remember to register your protest at the next election (which will probably be next fall from the look of things) by joining the few and the proud—the ballot decliners!

Geoffrey Medweth,
Arnold Bros. Transport,
Milton, Ont.

Enough said?

I have been reading about the plight of Ontario truckers and the unjust and unfair re-testing program that the Ontario Ministry of Transportation has launched against them.

This is only the most recent shot launched across the bow of the professional trucking community in Canada. It only confirms in my mind that we are considered second-class citizens in a country that we all worked very hard to build.

One wonders when the professional driving community will one day say they're fed up and show their disapproval as a group.

Over-enforcement by federal and provincial authorities has made life

miserable and the rules are mostly engineered around fines more than safety.

I haven't even gotten to the attitude of the general public.

Is it any wonder after decades of driving I'm about to say enough is enough?

Ross Thompson,
Mississauga

A few of my least-favorite things

I have been driving for 39 years. I sometimes think the government and trucking industry have done nothing to save lives but instead have created rules to mislead the public and extract money from truck drivers. Here's why.

First, why are owner-operators considered on duty when they're at home tinkering on their trucks? How does that make sense?

Also, does anybody really think roadside brake checks make drivers more careful?

We all know brake-related accidents are caused by incompetent drivers dispatched in trucks they did not understand in the first place, not because there was no brake check at the top of a hill.

Third, logbooks waste drivers' time and cause needless delays and harassment.

Instead we should educate drivers on knowing when to hit the sleeper berth and say no to dispatch or shippers who demand unrealistic deliveries. We should also give drivers back the authority for deciding when a load is going to be delivered so they cannot be fired for being late.

There would be a lot more happy truck drivers out there, and, I think, fewer accidents.

Gord Currie,
Chilliwack, B.C.



HOW TO REACH US: We want your feedback. Write editors@todaystrucking.com, or Letters to the Editor, Today's Trucking, 451 Attwell Dr., Toronto, ON M9W 5C4; fax: 416/614-8861.



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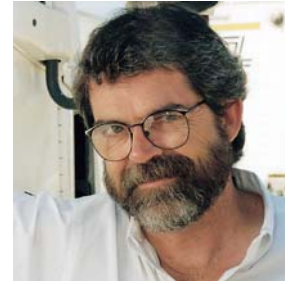
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By Rolf Lockwood



Bio Promises

We're gradually learning more about the true nature of biodiesel fuel, but I'm still left wanting.

Talk to Willie Nelson, as many of you probably do, and you'll hear that biodiesel fuel can clear away your warts and make your 16-year-old daughter the sweet thing she was a decade ago. It's magic. Only Barack Obama's inauguration can do more.

The natural skeptic in me has been dubious about this stuff for a long time, even though Rudolf's diesel engine was designed to run on peanut oil in the first place.

Renewable fuel sources are no-brainer territory, so the idea of biodiesel in general is fine with me. But until recently there was nowhere near enough compelling science to support the promise, and there still isn't much.

Nor has there been evidence of carefully considered public policy in the face of countless acres formerly devoted to food crops being turned over to 'growing' fuel. Even some European governments, and Europe produces more biofuel than the U.S. by quite a margin, have been backing away from their initial warm embrace of the 'new' fuel.

And then there's the standards issue. North American biofuel plants have been all over the map in terms of quality, so it's been buyer beware. The problems were largely restricted to little ma-and-pa producers, granted, but it's tough to build consumer confidence in the face of that reality.

Things changed last October when ASTM International, originally known as the American Society for Testing and Materials (www.astm.org), published new biodiesel blend standards. They apply to all finished biodiesel blends, from B2 on up, regardless of the type of feedstock used. The organization also updated its standard for 100-percent-pure biodiesel, or B100, to control quality prior to blending with conventional diesel fuel. However, I don't believe these standards are backed up by law or regulation even in the U.S., let alone here, so as a buyer you'd still better beware.

Yet we're about to see mandates that will put biodiesel in your tanks anyway, with the primary goal of reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Both British Columbia and Alberta have plans to

require renewable content in their diesel supply by 2010. Manitoba seems ready to do the same this year, and Ontario has been making noises too.

Federally, a renewable fuel standard will require five-percent renewable content in gasoline by 2010, along with two-percent in diesel and home heating fuel by 2012. Those blends are known as B2 and B5. Alberta's also using the 5/2 percent targets for 2010, while B.C. will demand B5 gas and diesel by next year.

Alberta, to its credit, says the move will support its renewable fuels sector and specifically the development of next-generation biofuels. By "next generation" they mean fuels derived from non-food-crop things like algae instead of canola and soy and the like. That's where we need to go, and the quicker, the better.

That province is also the source of some very useful bio-fuel testing. A year ago, together with the feds, Shell Canada and other stakeholders, it launched the Alberta Renewable Diesel Demonstration (ARDD), which aimed to test biodiesel in both the laboratory and real world trucking, with 60 trucks on the road through all four seasons. There was special interest in biodiesel's cold-weather performance, which has suffered in the past. So far we've only seen a report on the winter experience, which showed that ASTM-standard B2 and B5 blends are OK in the cold.

We're clearly still learning about this stuff, but there's one solid truth: at the light blends we're talking about, some scientists say there's hardly any environmental benefit to be had. B100 biodiesel would show useful gains on the CO2 front, among others, but we're only mandating B5 at most. And the science shows that emissions can change substantially from one feedstock to another anyway. Depending on the source—animal, vegetable, waste restaurant oil, etc.—emissions can actually be worse than with petroleum-based fuel.

In the end, I remain a skeptic, albeit a hopeful one. ▲

Rolf Lockwood is vice president, editorial, at Newcom Business Media. You can reach him at 416-614-5825 or rolf@todaystrucking.com.



At the light blends we're talking about, some scientists say there's hardly any environmental benefit to be had with biodiesel.

Dispatch

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

Failing Grade

It's the MTO's job to keep watch on you. Now, the auditor general has taken a hard look at the MTO. The verdict? The Ministry has a lot of work to do.

So who's auditing the auditors? Turns out, someone is and the marks don't look good for Ontario's fleet enforcement folks. Despite spending over \$35 million on truck enforcement in 2007-2008, commercial vehicle inspections in that province have actually dropped by 34 percent since 2003, according to the 2008 Auditor General's Report. Only three out of every 1,000 commercial trucks were subject to a roadside inspection (one or two per officer a day), says the AG, despite the

MTO responding to a 1997 audit that officers must spend a minimum of 50 percent of their time doing roadside inspections.

"This performance target is no longer in place," states the report. Additionally, over 20,000 operators have never applied for the required Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration (CVOR) certificate. "The Ministry does not know the number of operators currently in business because there is no requirement for CVOR certificates to be periodically

renewed," states the AG, who also questions why tow truck operators are exempt from the requirement despite some concerning safety rates and suspect equipment in that industry.

Other major findings include: Since only 15 truck inspection stations have impoundment facilities, unsafe vehicles identified at other locations were released after being repaired, without the required minimum 15-day penalty being imposed. Also, the AG accused

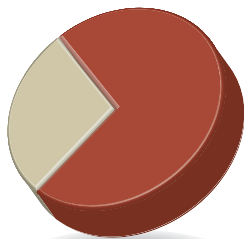


Poll Position

The polls below were conducted with voluntarily responses from our online readers (up until Jan.16). To have your say on dozens of poll questions like these, please browse through our daily news headlines at www.todaystrucking.com.

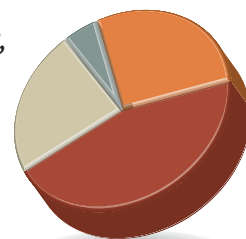
Do you accept a trucks-only speed limiter law?

72% NO
28% YES



If there was a speed limiter law, what range would you accept?

5% 90-95 km
28% 95-100 km
44% 100 PLUS km
23% NONE OF THE ABOVE



ches



WHAT'S THE SCORE? MTO should spend more time getting "its own house in order" instead of prosecuting speed limiter rules, OBAC says.



enforcement officers of avoiding impoundments because of the paperwork involved.

Plus, the Ministry still does not include in its safety ratings U.S. data on collisions and inspection results as called for under the federal Motor Vehicle Transport Act. The report suggests there are

18,000 such cases. However, the AG did attribute several enforcement and outreach initiatives by the MTO over the past decade to a 20 percent drop in the collision rate involving commercial trucks.

That alone isn't good enough for The Owner-Operators Business Association of Canada (OBAC), which pounced on the report and used its revelations to attack the MTO for endorsing mandatory speed limiter enforcement rather than making "better use of under-staffed and over-tasked resources." (A six-month educational period for the speed limiter rule kicked off Jan. 1, 2009, with full enforcement slated for July).

OBAC Executive Director Joanne Ritchie accuses the MTO of doing a poor job of maintaining high levels of road safety because of "inadequate facilities, slipshod monitoring, and outdated enforcement systems and procedures." So, she asks rhetorically, "how can [Transport] Minister Bradley be prepared to divert obviously scarce enforcement resources to verifying speed-limiter settings when the Auditor General can point to more than 20,000 operators who were involved in collisions—and who knows

CARL HERBERT WILSON, 1919 – 2008



When Carl H. Wilson was a young man growing up near Ontario's famous food-producing haven known as Holland Marsh, he persuaded his father to buy a truck so they could haul vegetables from the family property to the burgeoning Toronto market.

Wilson Sr. was so sold on the idea he bartered the family farm for a Toronto truck company. Since then, with Carl at the helm, the family turned Wilson's into one of Canada's largest and most distinguished trucking conglomerates.

CH, as he was known to his friends, passed away on Dec. 29, 2008 at his Toronto home. He loved the industry and coddled his customers, an attitude exemplified by the 70-year relationship that was sustained between Wilson's Truck Lines and A&P Foods.

Throughout those years, CH proved to be a pioneer in logistical thinking and a leader to hundreds of employees on both sides of the 49th parallel.

The Wilsons—their equipment characterized by the familiar stylized checkmark logo—now operate road-transport, waste-management, equipment leasing and logistics divisions.

According to people who knew him, CH was the type of guy who could relate well to all levels of his team. He never passed an employee without a greeting and without showing genuine interest in their lives and well-being.

Said one colleague: "CH was happy and caring of others right up to his final moments and will truly be missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him."

CH was also a devoted family man, executive, pilot, visionary and friend. Predeceased by his father John Wesley, his mother Mabel, wife Florence Mary and son John, CH leaves sister Joan and family, daughter Carol, sons Donald.

Douglas, Peter, Jim and Carl, daughter-in-law Donna, son-in-law Kim, 13 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

Fortunately for this industry, CH's fame passion, knowledge, and instincts for the business have successfully transferred to his son Jim, who now operates Wilson's Truck Lines.

The Wilson family has asked that any donations be forwarded to Affinity Health, 230 Brown's Line, Toronto, Ont., which played an important role in Carl's last years.



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Dispatches

how many more who haven't hit the radar screen in some way—running around without CVORs, with no way for the Ministry to track them?" Calling Ontario's Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement program "a mess," Ritchie continues: "The Ministry has a badly skewed set of priorities. Enforcement is down because they lack resources, yet they're prepared to add an enforcement initiative with no proven safety benefit to already overburdened roadside inspectors. Unbelievable."

MTO spokeswoman Emna Dhahak says the government is taking the report

SPEED LIMITERS? NOT HERE. NOT YET.

Ontario and Quebec may have implemented mandatory speed limiters on Jan. 1, but a Nova Scotia transport official says there are no plans for that province to do the same—at least not anytime soon. Transportation Department spokesman Steve Smith told local media that the department hasn't received any requests either "inside or outside the industry" to move towards speed limiter legislation. He did say, however, that the province intends to monitor how the rule is working in other jurisdictions.

The Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association supports the plan, but executive director Peter Nelson wonders if it'll fly in Atlantic Canada. He points out that there are only a handful of highways in the region with speed limits high enough for engine governors to be applied.

Despite the war of words that preceded implementation, the controversial rule requiring all truck engine speeds be capped at 105 km/h came online quietly in Ontario and Quebec last month. Things may get noisier come July 1, when "soft enforcement" ends and truck cops begin handing out fines in the \$300 range.

seriously and has already sprung into action. Among other steps, staff has been instructed "not to override any recommended interventions including facility

audits without strong justification and a full explanation" and the Ministry has cleared the backlog of facility audits identified by the auditor

"through re-deployment of resources and more streamlined processes." Perhaps most importantly, in December the MTO announced it would require



LOG BOOK

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March 4-6

The Work Truck Show 2009, McCormick Place, Chicago, Ill. Held in conjunction with the National Truck Equipment Association annual convention, the event includes more than 40 educational sessions, the latest work truck equipment from Classes 1-8 displayed over 500,000 sq.ft. Contact: 1-800/441-6832 or go www.ntea.com.

March 19-21

Mid-America Trucking Show (MATS), Kentucky Expo Center, Louisville, Ky. Considered the largest heavy-duty trade show in the U.S. with over 1.2 million sq ft of show space and 1,000 exhibiting companies revealing their latest products. Contact: clockwell@truckingshow.com or click on www.truckingshow.com.

March 22-25

Information Technology and Logistics Council (ITLC) 2009 Conference and Exhibit, Innisbrook Resort & Golf Club, Palm Harbor, Fla. Brought to you by the ATA for the benefit of motor carriers, logistics, and allied companies to advance their knowledge of IT and supply chain issues. Contact: 703/838-1718 or go to www.itlc-fleettech.com.

April 16-18

ExpoCam 2009, Place Bonaventure, Montréal. The sister event to Truck World, this is Canada's official truck show—and Quebec's largest—where decision makers



in the trucking industry come to see and buy. The show is owned and operated by Newcom Business Media, the publisher of this magazine as well as highwaySTAR, Transport Routier and Truck & Trailer magazines. Contact: 877/682-7469 or go to www.expo-cam.com.

April 25-28

NAFA Institute & Expo, New Orleans Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. NAFA Institute & Expo claims to be the only meeting and exposition that gives you unparalleled access to North American fleet purchasers and decision makers. Contact: Mark Miller 703/934-4700 x1107 or click on www.nafa.org.

April 28-29

Supply Chain & Logistics Canada Annual Conference, Paramount Conference and Event Venue, Vaughan, Ont. Titled "Supply Chain Leadership: Raising the Bar," this two-day event features the famed Transpo exhibition. Contact: Marle-Rae Dupee 905/513-7300 or go to www.sclcanada.org.

May 3-9

North American Health & Occupational Safety Week, Events across Canada. The 2009 initiative is again sponsored by the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) and Human Resources Development Canada (HRSDC). Contact: coopera@agi.ca or click on www.naosh.ca/english for more info.



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on the Docket

mandatory annual renewal of all truck and bus information.

Also in the works is a new, modernized facility audit program for 2009, which promises more efficient auditing and addresses issues raised in the report such as including conviction, inspection and collision information from across Canada.

Without having entirely read the AG's report, Clive Thomson comments that, at the very least, more needs to be done to close the gap between minimum compliance and real-world safety. "Often, your CVOR rating is referred to as your safety rating," says Thomson, formerly of Zurich Insurance, who now runs his own risk management consultancy business. "But it really isn't a safety rating at all. It's a compliance rating and that's not always what I consider safety to be.

"Having done many assessments over the years with many types of carriers, often their safety rating isn't really reflective of their safety practices, whether good or bad. Good carriers want to adopt safety practices and good risk management practices, which is above and beyond minimum compliance."

As for the rest of the AG's CVOR audit, there were additional concerns: Inspections, the report states, are not done consistently across districts. "For instance, the percentage of (out-of-service vehicles) varied from 15 percent to 35 percent by district, and the percentage of charges laid against drivers or operators based on inspections ranged from 8 percent to 30 percent."

Inspectors could often not retrieve CVOR records from the database quickly enough to use them in deciding which vehicles warranted a roadside inspection. Nearly 10,000 inspection reports languished more than five months before being entered

WIDE-BASE PARITY:

All truck tires are now considered equal before the law in Ontario. The government in that province has finally allowed full parity between new generation wide-base single tires and a set of duals. The change means that Ontario joins Quebec as the only two provinces that allow the fuel-efficient single heavy truck tires to operate at the same weight limits (and payload) as conventional dual tires.

Previously, Ontario's vehicle-weight threshold for single tires was 8,000 kg per axle on a standard 53-ft tandem trailer, creating a 1,100 kg gap between single tires and duals. Until the last few years, most provinces capped single tires at 6,000 kg per axle, making it economically impossible to spec them.

Several provinces, like B.C., Manitoba, and New Brunswick recently raised the weight threshold to 7,700 kg, making it easier to spec single tires for loads dedicated to the U.S., where the maximum weight is 17,000 lb (7,700 kg). The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA), which has been pushing for the change as part of its enviroTruck initiative, welcomed the news.

"By removing the weight penalty on wide base single tires, carriers will now have the flexibility they need to use single tires on the majority of drive and trailer axle configurations," says OTA President David Bradley.

Wide-base singles are proven to be quieter, more environmentally friendly, and provide a much smoother ride than duals.

Tire rolling resistance accounts for up to 35 percent



NO FEAR TO TREAD:

It took more than a few years, but trucks in Ontario can now easily spec single wide tires with no weight penalty.

of fuel consumption. Wide-base tires have been found on average to produce between four and five-percent fuel savings compared to conventional duals.

TAKE YOUR TAX AND...

It was a long, hard fight, but Ontario trucking companies will not have to pony up extra funds to cover the punitive Michigan Business Tax (MBT). Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm signed into law a bill exempting Canadian cross-border trucking companies and auto parts manufacturers that do not have a permanent establishment in the state from having to pay the MBT. According to the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA), the MBT, which is a gross receipts tax, could have cost Ontario trucking companies who operate in the state around US\$1,000

per truck per year had the bill not passed.

The OTA estimates that Ontario trucking companies would have been on the hook for at least \$40 million a year.

The essence of the argument put forward by OTA was that the MBT is inconsistent with international tax norms, defies the spirit of the Canada-US tax treaty, not to mention it runs counter to the way Canadian provinces tax Michigan business.

Ontario and Canada do not tax Michigan businesses that operate across the border. Only companies that have a permanent establishment in a province are subject to corporate income taxation and no Canadian jurisdiction has a gross receipts tax.

"We just wanted to be treated fairly," added Bradley. "It makes little economic sense in these difficult times for the economies of both Michigan and Ontario—which are so dependent upon the automotive manufacturing industry—for the two jurisdictions to be working against and not with each other."

OTA began its lobby campaign to amend the MBT legislation (which came into force on January 1, 2008) in the fall of 2007. After passing relatively smoothly through the Senate in January 2008, the bill to exempt Canadian truckers ran into opposition when it went before the House of Representatives Tax Policy Committee.

After months of wrangling, the bill finally made it back to the House tax committee in December, where it was passed in an all-night session.

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into the system.

Alarming, the number of interventions against high-risk operators has also been declining since 2003. And two-thirds of 740 operator facility audits were cancelled by Ministry staff.

“The Ministry needs to increase its efforts to obtain the information needed to identify the higher-risk operators and must strengthen its enforcement activities and its oversight of private-sector motor vehicle inspection stations if it is to ensure that unsafe commercial vehicles are kept off the road,” the Auditor General stated in the report.

Adds Ritchie, waxing, no doubt, with tinge of contentment: “Clearly, the Ministry has a lot of work to do in getting its enforcement house in order.”

Regional Economics

Winds Blow West

No two economies are created equal, but there’s a pretty good consensus globally that business won’t come easy in the next year or so.

Western Canada, though, has always been a unique case. Because of the region’s energy riches—and the insatiable demand for black gold across much of the world—it’s been able to stay somewhat insulated from the manufacturing and financial market woes in the rest of Canada and much of the U.S.

Until now, that is. The global recession has been just that. Not only has demand for oil and energy products fallen off a cliff in the U.S., but even seemingly unstoppable economies like China’s and India’s have

ground to a halt—not just in regards to their appetite for oil, but also for other raw materials and commodities the West is famous for.

While many transportation leaders are less than unenthusiastic about the current economic climate, westerners, being westerners, are already eying the future and are planning how to hit the ground running when things do turnaround.

The ability to respond to economic stimulus will largely rely on the quality of the infrastructure system enhancements being put in place. Just ask anyone using the roads in Fort McMurray, Alta., what can happen if infrastructure lags behind economic growth. But is Western Canada’s transportation system up to it?

At a conference hosted by Westac, there was general agreement that when the economy does rebound, it will likely be different growth than in the past; but a turnaround nonetheless.

“The next 20 years will not look like the past 20 years in terms of growth,” notes Chris Holling, executive managing director, global trade and transportation advisory services, IHS Global Insight. “Don’t get trapped into where we are now, but look forward to the key drivers of trade,” he adds. “There will be recovery and the response from trade will come quickly.”

So, back to the question: Does Canada’s transportation system—and the West’s particularly—have any game?

“All of our work on the gateways is focused on the long term,” explains Kristine Burr, assistant deputy minis-

ter, policy group, Transport Canada. “There’s no doubt the next few years are daunting, but we’re looking 20 to 30 years down the road.”

A few years ago there was more than a bit of skepticism in these parts whether the infrastructure could handle increased freight volumes. But now, even though there’s

the breather might actually be beneficial and give markets a chance to realign after unsustainable price increases. But it won’t last forever.

“China led us up, China led us down, and China will lead us back up again,” notes Allen Wright, president and CEO of the Coal Association of Canada.



NEXT STOP, RECOVERY: There’s little doubt freight economy will bounce back eventually. And Westerners say they’ll be ready when does.

still work to be done, there seems to be a “bring it on” sense of optimism around all modes of transportation.

Despite a myriad of impediments, including capacity constraints and labor disruptions affecting their operations, the railways and the coastal container handling industry are nonetheless buoyed about the future.

On a recent trip to China, Paul Waite, vice-president of CN, didn’t get any sense that Canada’s Pacific trade infrastructure has a black eye. He said there was no mention of those issues by his hosts, which shows “the tremendous progress we’ve made.”

China’s growth has slowed from around 12 percent a year to less than 5 percent; but it’s still growth and more than most advanced economies can match these days. Many speakers agreed

A ROAD WELL TRAVELED

It’s no secret the investment in infrastructure over the past 30 years or so has been less than minimal in western Canada. But things started to change a few years ago, starting with the partnership between B.C. and Ottawa to launch the Asia-Pacific Gateway Strategy.

Similar enhancement projects have since been adopted all over, from Atlantic Canada, to the Ontario-Quebec corridor and northern Manitoba.

What really drove these projects forward—aside from government cash, of course—was a change in attitude. The focus was less on each mode of transportation and more on creating a successful transportation network, delegates say.

Another new niche in transportation development was on how to distribute

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funds. Previously, money was invested where the system had crumbled the most. But today, the investments are prioritized on what will benefit the economy more—basically making it easier to move goods from production to market.

That doesn't mean there are many takers for forecasting an exact turnaround time for the economy. As one speaker quipped, "the problem with forecasting is looking into the future."

— Steve MacLeod

HOS

If It Ain't Broke...

Truck fleets in the U.S. are promising that the latest attempt by "anti-truck groups and their allies" to block the final version of the U.S. hours-of-service rules will be dismissed by regulators.

After being ordered by a federal court to close loopholes and better explain how it came to its regulatory conclusions, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) came back last fall with a final HOS rule that maintains all the main pillars, including the 11-hour driving and 34-hour restart provisions. In other words,

the HOS standard will remain unchanged from the "interim" rule the trucking industry has been working under.

The rules have been in limbo since first being introduced in 2004 as special interest groups like Public Citizen and the Teamsters challenged their legality from day one. They've got tenacity, give 'em that. Public Citizen wasted little time responding to the latest government announcement, filing a petition for reconsideration with FMCSA. Delivered with its typical rhetoric, the group complained that the rules force drivers to work "in rolling sweatshops."

"Under this rule, companies can force interstate truck drivers to work and drive grueling hours that are unheard of in other U.S. workplaces in the 21st century," said the president of Public Citizen Joan Claybrook (who just announced her retirement).

Contrary to some claims, the rules have never been overturned in court on "substantive grounds related to their safety impact," FMCSA's Administrator John Hill points out. Prior court rulings that forced FMCSA

heard on the Street

■ The annual **FERGUS TRUCK SHOW** will happen this year on schedule, and in the regular location. Earlier in the



winter, the future of the four-day show (scheduled for July 23 to 26) was cast into doubt when people who owned property abutting the show grounds didn't want to renew their leases with the show organizers. CFO Wayne Billings tells us that agreements have since been reached, but the show grounds will have to shrink a bit.

■ The **MULLEN GROUP INCOME FUND** has revealed its intention to become the latest transport outfit to jump back on the corporate bandwagon. "On Oct. 31, 2006 when the federal government announced its intention to effectively eliminate the income trust structure, we knew that the day would come when we would be forced to convert," stated Murray Mullen. Former income trusts TransForce, Canada Cartage and ATS Andlauer have all surrendered their income fund status and gone private.

■ **PACLEASE** continues its expansion with the announcement of 13 new locations, including Peterbilt of Ontario PacLease in Cardinal, Ont., in Whitby, Ont., and in Brampton, Ont.; as well as Peterbilt Atlantic PacLease in Kentville, N.S. and Great West PacLease in Red Deer, Alta.

to rewrite or amend the rules have been based on legalese and other procedural problems.

The rules, he continues, are based on an exhaustive scientific review in consultation with medical researchers who were experts in the human body's 24-hour circadian rhythm. And while

these rules have been in effect, he points out, large-truck crash rates, injury rates and death rates have fallen to all-time lows. There haven't been any major studies that positively conclude the new rules are directly responsible for the sinking crash rates, but at the very least they can't be hurting,

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as alleged by Public Citizen. Although the curtains could be closing on the four-year HOS saga, the issue of electronic on board recorders (EOBRs) is just heating up. At press time, it didn't look as if the much-anticipated final EOBR proposal would make it into the rulebooks in the waning days of the Bush administration. Asked what the chances are the rule gets done before the new regime takes over the White House, John Hill told media "it doesn't look like we are making progress at this point." The FMCSA's original plan required EOBRs for a minimum of two years for carriers and owner-ops charged with two serious HOS review violations. Under this system, only about 1,000 of the nearly 700,000 carriers FMCSA regulates would fall under the rules.

But after being pressured by the National Transportation Safety Board, FMCSA reportedly toughened up the final version of the regulation. "It's still not as far as a lot of people would like me to go, but it's significantly more than what we had proposed," Hill said at a recent conference.

Short Sea Shipping

"Unfair" Fee Could Anchor Ferry

An American small business is taking on the Canadian government and the owner is looking for truckers' support. Gregg Ward, the operator of the Detroit-Windsor Truck Ferry is going head to bow with Ottawa over what he says are "discriminatory" fees being charged to his



SINK OR SWIM: The Detroit Windsor Truck Ferry is a reliable cross-border transporter of hazmat and high-value loads (see the boatload of vintage Model T's Ford trusts the ferry with). But it's taking in water due to an expensive fee arbitrarily imposed by the Canadian government.

business. The truck ferry is the approved cross-border service for transporting hazmat trucks between Windsor and Detroit.

As *Today's Trucking* reported last year, Ward has been battling the feds since the Icebreaking Service Fee's (ISF) inception in 1999. Now Ward tells us that he's trying to sue for his rights, but Canadian government officials keep delaying his case.

The \$3,000 fee really has nothing to do with providing ice-breaking services, explains Ward. In the Detroit River, the large majority of such services are provided by the U.S. Coast Guard at no charge to Canada. Plus, while in Canada, all activities of the truck ferry take place within the Port of Windsor, which is supposed to be exempt from the ISF. But Ward says he's charged anyway because his barges leave the Windsor Port to head to the U.S. side of the border. "It makes no difference to the regulators," quips Ward, "that upon leav-

ing the Port of Windsor, we enter the sovereign waters of the United States."

To date, Ward says he's spent \$220,000 in fees and legal costs (The Canadian Justice Dept. sued Ward in 2005 for non-payment of fees and Ward is also challenging the federal government's policy in court). But, so far, insists Ward, "we've been denied our day in court." He claims that Crown attorneys continue to delay responses to Federal Court filings and allege to "misplace" relevant case files. When we contacted her, Canadian Justice Department Spokeswoman Carole Saindon said it would be inappropriate to comment on a case currently before the courts.

2010 Emissions

Engines Not Okay For EPA?

Cummins has reaffirmed its intention to use selective catalytic reduction (SCR) to meet 2010 EPA engine rules,

even though the environmental watchdog agency is investigating how the company is achieving that technology. The EPA is reportedly concerned that the copper zeolite Cummins plans to use in its SCR system could cause carcinogenic dioxins. If EPA finds that is the case it may not certify the system.

Other engine manufacturers building SCR engines are using iron zeolite in their catalytic process. (Navistar is the only OEM that's not using SCR for heavy trucks, choosing instead to continue with exhaust gas recirculation).

Advancements in copper zeolite technology as an efficient way of eliminating NOx is one of the reasons Cummins changed its mind about using SCR for 2010.

"Questions have been raised regarding the potential for copper-containing diesel SCR catalysts to promote the formation of dioxin compounds," the EPA stated in a recent letter to engine makers, adding that the agency will do its own testing on the system. "...if the data are inconclusive or show increased dioxin emissions, then EPA likely will not certify an engine family utilizing such products unless a manufacturer can provide data which demonstrates the intended use of the copper catalyst doesn't increase dioxin emissions." Based on the categorical affirmation of its SCR system, Cummins doesn't seem particularly worried, though. A spokeswoman told trucking media in the U.S. the company is confident the data will conclude copper zeolite is safe to use. ▲



So... what's The Full Story?

The Full Story offers a deeper look at the industry's most important issues such as border-crossing, hours-of-service legislation, the upcoming diesel emission regulations and much more.

To keep on top of these and other issues, you'll want to check out The Full Story next time you visit todaystrucking.com.



Canada: Truck Sales Index

November 2008

CLASS 8	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
International	382	5736	5257	25.2%
Freightliner	336	4302	4355	18.9%
Kenworth	228	3601	3826	15.8%
Peterbilt	120	2302	2815	10.1%
Volvo	227	2199	1703	9.7%
Sterling	128	1931	2318	8.5%
Mack	106	1542	1521	6.8%
Western Star	83	1119	1702	4.9%
TOTAL	1610	22,732	23,497	100.0%



CLASS 7	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
International	84	1240	1098	35.0%
Peterbilt	52	650	610	18.4%
Kenworth	48	628	590	17.7%
Freightliner	20	396	511	11.2%
Hino Canada	29	353	425	10.0%
Sterling	26	274	298	7.7%
General Motors*	0	0	629	0.0%
Ford*	0	0	122	0.0%
TOTAL	259	3541	4283	100.0%



CLASS 6	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
International	22	346	264	47.9%
Hino Canada	21	194	356	26.8%
Freightliner	7	126	98	17.4%
Sterling	9	57	32	7.9%
General Motors*	0	0	160	0.0%
Ford*	0	0	125	0.0%
TOTAL	59	723	1035	100.0%



CLASS 5	This Month	YTD '08	YTD '07	Share
Sterling	39	768	171	36.3%
Hino Canada	51	612	697	28.9%
International	20	493	546	23.3%
Kenworth	12	199	0	9.4%
Freightliner	1	42	167	2.0%
Ford*	0	0	2001	0.0%
General Motors*	0	0	1307	0.0%
TOTAL	123	2114	4889	100.0%



Canada: Provincial Sales (Class 8)

CLASS 8	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NL	CDA
International	9	46	7	27	143	104	17	7	3	19	382
Freightliner	25	65	20	13	123	53	24	13	0	0	336
Kenworth	20	88	9	7	38	54	3	9	0	0	228
Peterbilt	8	53	17	1	12	16	10	3	0	0	120
Volvo Trucks	10	28	40	30	77	31	2	9	0	0	227
Sterling	4	18	4	0	50	42	4	4	0	2	128
Mack	8	10	11	19	35	16	6	1	0	0	106
Western Star	7	39	4	0	15	9	6	2	0	1	83
TOTAL	91	347	112	97	493	325	72	48	3	22	1610

Sources: Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers Association and Ward's Communication.

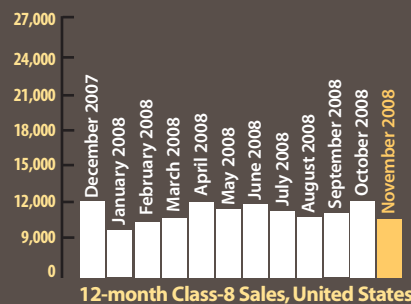
* The Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association, which supplies these numbers, reports that it is in the process of making changes to its monthly GVW sales stats report. Until that project is completed, the sales stats report no longer contains Ford or General Motors monthly sales numbers or current YTD numbers. Because of this, we've defaulted these totals to zero for the time being. CVMA indicates that reported sales numbers for both OEMs will resume for the June 2008 monthly report. Thank you.



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U.S.: Retail Truck Sales

CLASSE 8	This Month	YTD '08
Freightliner	2742	30,674
International	3066	29,544
Peterbilt	1190	15,628
Kenworth	1024	14,287
Volvo	1286	11,996
Mack	761	10,522
Sterling	438	6909
Western Star	88	1106
Other	3	110
TOTAL	10,598	120,776





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INSIDE:

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MANAGING PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGY, BUSINESS, AND SAFETY

WALKER, TRUCKER, JOINER:

L.E. Walker President Julie Tanguay sees huge advantages for smaller companies who join professional organizations.



Working With The Competition

trucking *New OTA chair sees merit in cooperation, especially when times are tough. By Peter Carter*

L.E. Walker driver Al Millar still drives the blue Sterling Silverstar that rolled off the line at the St. Thomas, Ont., assembly plant eight years ago.

The rig, which now has more than 2.4 million clicks on the odometer, was actually the 100,000th truck to be built in the factory, and since that time Millar has made countless trips to and from that same facility.

And nobody around the south-central Ontario community—least of all the folks at L.E. Walker Transportation—was happy with the announcement that the Sterling factory will shut its doors this March.

“It’s a beautiful plant, too,” says L.E. Walker President Julie Tanguay, “and it’s

only 16 years old.”

Indeed, Tanguay remembers taking delivery of the very first truck—a Freightliner FLD—to come off the St. Thomas line, back in 1992.

Since that time, because the plant had such a high local profile and because the company she runs, L.E. Walker, boasts a long history with the area, many people guessed—wrongly—that the assembly plant was Walker’s bread-and-butter.

“We’ve definitely grown with the plant,” Tanguay says. “Everybody knew that it was a fairly substantial account for our company and people associated the plant with being our sole client. But we have lots of good customers.”

She’s not denying that trucking has been tough for anybody in her part of the country. Walker operates out of the automotive heartland of the region that has been hit so hard by the recession that it has been described as a “have-not” province. (“The town’s hurting,” she says. “St. Thomas can’t take much more.”)

Still, although Tanguay might be down at the moment, she’s not out. In fact, rather than fading, her star’s on the rise.

In November she became Chair of the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA).

The appointment comes at a unprecedented stage in that province’s trucking history. The economy’s failing, and rate-cutters are emerging from the shadows. The Ontario Ministry of Transportation on the advice of the OTA has implemented mandatory speed limiter laws, and they’ve been challenged by none other than the American owner-operators’ organization, OOIDA.

In fact, on one of the days Tanguay was being interviewed for this story a group of owner-ops (not Walker drivers) had organized an anti-speed-limiter, traffic-slowing, drive-by demonstration on the 401. It was annulled by a snow storm, but still, anger seems to hang in the air.

Small wonder that at the time of her appointment, the outgoing OTA Chair Mark Seymour of Kriska Transportation asked if she’d like to put off starting the new job, in light of the Sterling plant closure. Says Tanguay, “He [Seymour] said, ‘Julie, if taking the chair is going to take you off focus I’d be willing to do another year.’”

Truth be told anyone who knows Tanguay would have been surprised had she accepted. Seymour describes her as “a person of outstanding character and someone who is passionate about the industry, not just because she grew up in it but because she grew to love it.”

Ever since Tanguay’s paternal grandparents Evan and Lola Walker founded the company in 1947 with a single truck, L.E. Walker’s story has been one of growth.

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ALL drivers — company drivers and owner-operators alike. If you know someone worthy of such an honour, please take the time to complete the nomination form and return it to us as soon as you can. We'll be presenting the award during ExpoCam 2009 in Montreal, Place Bonaventure, on Saturday April 18, 2009. Forms are available on-line at www.highwaystar.ca, www.todaystrucking.com, or use the form on the opposite page to tell us about your nominee.

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Please take a moment to NOMINATE someone today.

The highwaySTAR of the Year may be nominated by anyone with a business or personal relationship to the nominee. We will conduct follow up interviews with both the nominee and the nominator to ensure the accuracy of the information provided.

I WOULD LIKE TO NOMINATE:

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Current employer/contracted to _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel. home: _____ Bus: _____ Mobile: _____

NOMINATED BY:

Name: _____

Relationship to nominee: family/spouse ; employer ; co-worker ; friend .

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Tel. home: _____ Bus: _____ Mobile: _____

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In your own words please explain why you think this person is deserving of the title highwaySTAR of the Year: Discuss their unique approach to work, their problem solving skills and business skills. Detail any courses taken, and certifications earned. Give examples of extraordinary customer service or any unique hobbies or extra-curricular interests including any community involvement.

Remember, we can only judge your nominee by what you tell us. You may make a stronger case by sending additional information on a separate sheet. Feel free to include supporting documentation with your nomination.

FAX THIS FORM TO (416) 614-8861. This form can also be found at www.highwaystar.ca and can be electronically submitted. You may e-mail your nomination with all of this information to rolf@highwaystar.ca, or, mail this entry to:

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Description of selection criteria

In keeping with highwaySTAR's mandate, we are looking for a well-rounded, community-minded company driver or owner-operator who is active outside the trucking industry and takes the image of the industry personally. While driving record, years of service, and driving habits are important; they will be considered along with other aspects of the driver as a whole.

All nominees will be awarded points based on the extent of their community and industry involvement, efforts to improve our industry's image, general outlook on life, safety record, and years of service.

Nomination forms will be reviewed by a panel of editors and contributors to highwaySTAR magazine. A short-list of finalists will be peer-reviewed by a panel of drivers and owner-operators from across Canada.





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MILES AHEAD

At last count, the company had about 200 power units, 65 owner-operators and 150 company drivers. Their flatbed division, Mid America Freight Systems, keeps 35 trucks and 70 trailers busy.

Her father, Larry, was the second-generation Walker to truck. He and his wife Jean had daughters, Laurie, Julie and Wendie. When the three were young teenagers, Julie recalls, they started working for the family company and they also learned, the importance of business organizations like the OTA.

"When I was 14," she recalls, "my dad used to drive myself and my sisters to the OTA offices on Wednesday nights. We

ticularly at a time like the present when there are so many rate-cutting outfits out there—people who are willing to work together also have to be ready to compete with their colleagues.

Seymour put it this way: "When you want to work for the betterment of the industry at large, you'd better be prepared to work side by side with the guy you're competing against.

"If you don't work with your competition, you're really trying to go where nobody else has been before."

Tanguay, he says, is the right kind of person to lead the country's biggest provincial

She says there are situations in which a shipper will request that everybody bidding on a project will have; say, ISO standards, satellite tracking and C-TPAT. Then, they will finally award the contract to a carrier who in fact has none of the above. It's a public safety issue, as well as one of fairness, Tanguay says.

"There needs to be more accountability on the shippers' parts so they're more responsible for their carriers."

She prides herself on Walker's long record of safely driven (and speed governed) trucks and says she would never want to see that compromised.



MISTER SMITH GOES TO OTTAWA

What do Preston Manning, Wayne Gretzky's father Walter, David Letterman's Musical Director Paul Shaffer and Manitoulin's top trucker **Douglas Smith** have in common?

They all attended a special ceremony at Rideau Hall in Ottawa in December to receive the country's highest civilian honor, the Order of Canada.

A year earlier, Governor General Michaëlle Jean announced that Smith, the founder of the Manitoulin Group, was invited to join the exclusive group but the actual induction ceremony didn't take place until December.

Smith is the second trucker to be invited to the Order of Canada. The first was Trimac founder, the late Bud McCaig, who received the order in 1999 and passed away in 2005.

For more on Douglas Smith's investiture, log on to www.todaystrucking.com and type "Manitoulin" into the search engine.

would actually take night courses there to learn about trucking outside of the family business."

Her oldest sister Laurie started in the business as a driver, Julie herself went into sales. Wendie eventually left to start her own trucking company in nearby Blenheim, Ont.

Their father retired in '87; and that's when Julie, at 23, with her sisters and mom, took the reins.

And following in her father's tread patterns, she signed on as an active OTA member.

"Still, if you'd asked me a few years back whether I would ever become chair of the OTA I'd have said 'no way'.

"It was pretty intimidating [coming onto the board] at first; there were all these legends of the trucking industry and then there was me, the only woman," she recalls. "I don't think I said a word for the first couple of years—I listened and learned—but gradually I became more comfortable."

She's a huge advocate of trucking organizations. And she's well aware—par-

association at the moment. "She's a relationship-type person and that'll prove to serve her very well. It's tough to strike a balance when it's a buyer's market and you're sharing a seat on the board with people you compete against.

While Tanguay acknowledges the inherent contradiction in cooperating with competitors, her long history in the business lets her see the upside. Clearly.

"I can't even begin to put a price on the network and support I get from working with the people at the OTA. But I will say it has helped me make decisions that I have benefited financially from.

"For one thing, it has given me the strength to get out in the marketplace and explain to shippers how our surcharges work. You're a lot stronger when you know your competitors are doing it too."

Among her goals at the OTA, Tanguay includes working more closely with shippers so there's more consistency between, for example, the specs they call for in RFQs and what they ultimately accept.

"My objective with David [Bradley, the OTA's CEO] would be to educate the shipping community and work with the shipping organizations that ultimately I believe do have a corporate responsibility."

She also says her leadership is proof to all the small and medium-sized truckers in the country that provincial trucking associations aren't monopolized by the big-guys.

Tanguay's personal agenda at the OTA is exhaustive, including interprovincial reciprocity and improved relations between carriers and government.

In addition, to running her business and serving on the boards of both OTA and CTA, Tanguay is also completing a certificate in the OPM Management Program at the Harvard Business School of Executive Management.

Finally, she says, in the rare moments she's not working, she likes skiing, riding around on the back of her husband Rob's Harley, and she says, spending as much time as she can with her kids. "And," she adds, "now, my grandson." ▲

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Spiting Your Face

safety *Is it worth squeezing pennies until the dollars themselves explode?*

By Brian Botham

Cutting back on safety and compliance because times are tough is extremely backwards thinking.

The safety department must be seen as a profit center and not a cost center.

A well-run safety department ensures that you hire the best drivers and not let your standards drop just to fill seats. Your safety department—in some cases that means just you—must work diligently to implement collision-avoidance programs, defensive-driver training, log-book maintenance, etc., even when times are slow.

While each of these programs may initially cost money the small amount invested will save thousands.

I love to refer to my “Cost vs. Profit” calculator to show this exercise. (See, “*It’s Payback Time*”).

It is very easy to use and shows you at a glance how profits can be eaten up by collisions and other incidents.

For example: A carrier running at a 3.5-percent profit margin who suffers a collision and has to pay a deductible of \$25,000 (never mind any other costs associated with that collision) will need to generate \$714,285.71 in revenue to offset that accident.

A smaller carrier with a one-percent margin and a \$5,000 deductible will need to generate \$500,000 of revenue to offset the loss.

If we turn it around and, for example, invest \$5,000

IT'S PAYBACK TIME

REVENUE REQUIRED TO EARN BACK THE COSTS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER INCIDENTS



INCIDENT COST	1 Percent	2 Percent	3 Percent	3.5 Percent
\$1,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$33,333.33	\$28,571.43
\$2,500.00	\$250,000.00	\$125,000.00	\$83,333.25	\$71,428.57
\$5,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$166,666.50	\$142,857.14
\$7,500.00	\$750,000.00	\$375,000.00	\$249,999.75	\$214,285.71
\$10,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$333,333.00	\$285,714.29
\$15,000.00	\$1,500,000.00	\$750,000.00	\$499,999.50	\$428,571.43
\$20,000.00	\$2,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$666,666.00	\$571,428.57
\$25,000.00	\$2,500,000.00	\$1,250,000.00	\$833,332.50	\$714,285.71
\$30,000.00	\$3,000,000.00	\$1,500,000.00	\$999,999.00	\$857,142.86
\$40,000.00	\$4,000,000.00	\$2,000,000.00	\$1,333,332.00	\$1,142,857.14
\$50,000.00	\$5,000,000.00	\$2,500,000.00	\$1,666,665.00	\$1,428,571.43
\$100,000.00	\$10,000,000.00	\$5,000,000.00	\$3,333,330.00	\$2,857,142.86
\$250,000.00	\$25,000,000.00	\$12,500,000.00	\$8,333,325.00	\$7,142,857.14
\$500,000.00	\$50,000,000.00	\$25,000,000.00	\$16,666,650.00	\$14,285,714.29
\$1,000,000.00	\$100,000,000.00	\$50,000,000.00	\$33,333,300.00	\$28,571,428.57

into driver training and because of this training can reduce our collisions even by one a year, the savings are huge whether you are running at a 3.5-percent or one-percent margin.

The carrier who decides to not train drivers and thus save money now stands a better chance of having accidents. That carrier's drivers are not the well-trained professionals they should be, and he has just sent all his profits out the window and more than likely in these economic times will not survive.

I know of a number of carriers who went out of business due to a severe collision, because they were operating at low margins when the costs from a collision literally closed their doors.

As for those who do survive, not only will they face increased scrutiny due to their safety records but they will also be forced to pay higher insurance premiums or they will not be able to obtain insurance coverage at all.

This formula is not just for collisions but can be applied

to any costs the carrier has.

Fines from audits usually reach into the thousands. Roadside breakdowns due to poor or non-existent maintenance practices all have a dollar figure attached to them and can be viewed the same through the same lens.

The idea: get from A to B, economically and damage free. The plan: Make safety a profit center. ▲

Brian Botham, CDS, is a certified director of safety through NATMI. He can be reached at 519-533-3656 or bbotham@cmvsafety.ca.

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Downshifting a Gear or Two

tips *Is the downturn simply the free market's way of letting us get a grip?*
By Dave MacNevin

It was less than a year ago that new Canadian truckers were arriving from France, Russia, Poland and other over-the-pond countries. The demand for drivers was such that if you had a pulse and could use both your feet and hands you were hired.

We in the industry believed we were headed for a catastrophic driver shortage. We even turned down business, something a trucking company never had the luxury or the inkling of doing in years gone by. Remember those days when you accepted 12 loads with only eight available trucks and in doing so gave your dispatcher ulcers?

Well, as Bob Dylan mumbled back when you were a kid, “the times they are a-changin’”.

These days, the media are full of global doom and gloom. And I’m hoping it inspires most of us to not dwell on the past as much as talk about how we move forward and thrive from this point onward.

As far as I’m concerned, whether you call it a downturn or a slowdown, my personal response is “thank you, very much.” That’s right. Thanks.

Here in Alberta we can now catch our breath, get back to casual 12-hour days and find that balance in life that trucking should by rights offer all of us Blackberry addicts.

I don’t have to leave my office anymore and jump into the truck to make deliveries because there are no drivers to do them. As an aside, it was during one of those unplanned deliveries that I learned I could steer with no hands, thanks to Molson’s



“If you’re going to attend the school of hard knocks, you might as well learn something; otherwise you’re just going to come away with a bruised noggin.”

and the hours I spent in my comfy office chair. So one of my New Years resolutions is to use the exercise bicycle for something other than hanging my clothes on.

So as we downshift to adjust to the current economic situation, what is it we need to do better? After all, if you’re going to attend the school of hard knocks, you might as well learn something; otherwise you’re just going to come away with a bruised noggin and no knowledge.

Clearly this gloomy period could spell catastrophe for

those whose debt load exceeds their cash flow. That’s lesson number one. Bad debt can kill you.

Fuel consumption is still a large piece of our operating cost, and how we move forward with surcharges is a subject we could write books

that concentrated on a niche instead of being all things to all shippers should have stability and success (unless of course your niche was hauling for the Big 3).

We have to be careful that we don’t slide the revenue scale down in search of replacement work. I have seen some gains in our industry on accessorial charges and getting paid for what costs us money. It wasn’t that long ago that we all suffered from chasing top-line revenue and performing freebies, leaving margins that left little jingling in our jeans.

One of the keys to adjusting to this downturn will be having the right amount of equipment for the work you have. Pay attention to trailer:truck ratios. Pay close attention to getting paid on time. Aging receivables could turn into some serious liability when the banks start calling in loans on less-than-profitable shippers.

Let’s not panic, but we do need to get back to basics and cutback on some of our excesses we have all enjoyed in the last few years. Exercise bike here I come. ▲

Dave MacNevin is Operations Manager at Whitecourt Transport. In his 36-year career, he has managed operations for—among others—Molson Breweries, Texport, Arnold Bros, Public Freightways and RTL Robinson. MacNevin also was a highway driver for almost a decade.

DEF JAM

BY MARCO BEGHETTO

By this time next year, you will be putting something called DIESEL EXHAUST FLUID into most of your new engines.

- Do you have any idea where you're going to get DEF?
- Or how much it costs?
- Or simply, what the heck to do with the stuff?

HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW.

CHANGE' has been an exceptionally fashionable motto lately. For better or worse, it's been used to sell just about everything from soda pop to the American presidency. And while we all know that very little reformation actually goes on in Washington—or Ottawa, for that matter—the trucking industry, instead, can boastfully say different.

Commercial vehicle manufacturers and their customers are used to change. They've been adapting to rapid technological upheavals to fuel and emission standards for the last 20 years—yes, sometimes begrudgingly—but they meet their targets nonetheless; even when the challenge at

some points seems too technologically daunting, such as at the start of this decade when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) told engine makers they had less than 10 years to virtually eliminate particulate matter and nitrous oxide (NOx) emissions from diesel engines.

We're now quickly approaching the final chapter of that three-pronged mandate. This last round of emissions rules specifically deals with reducing NOx to just 0.2 grams per brake hp in all 2010 commercial diesels.

It's already been well documented that all engine manufacturers with the exception of Navistar will use selective catalytic reduction (SCR) exhaust aftertreatment to meet the "10" standard. That's the emissions reduction solution that's been in place in Europe and other countries for a

number of years. International Trucks, instead, will go with an updated version of cooled exhaust gas recirculation (EGR)—same as in 2007. (Cummins says it'll use both depending on the market).

So why the split among OEMs? Well it depends on whom you talk to, but basically, Navistar says EGR is a much cheaper, proven system in North America, which requires no aftertreatment; specifically, Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) like SCR does. That means no extra DEF tank, a lighter truck, and no dependence on drivers to routinely fill it up.

Competitors point out that although SCR trucks will be pricier, their technology is the first since 2002 to reduce emissions while at the same time providing up to five-percent in fuel savings, unlike EGR,



shapes has solved most spacing impediments apropos specialty equipment, hydraulics, or other doodads hanging off the frame.

FIRST SIGNS OF DEFNESS

Regardless, truck buyers will get their fill of this marketing war over the next 12 months, to be sure, so let's move on to the issue of DEF as a requirement for any SCR unit.

First off, what is it? DEF as a spec is made from urea, a common ammonia-based chemical used to eliminate NOx when injected into the hot exhaust gas downstream of the diesel particulate filter (DPF).

How much it will cost in North America depends on a number of things. Right now it's about \$2.60 a gallon, but like in Europe, it can vary based on such things as production costs and the commodity price of urea. (The good news is that urea's main raw material is natural gas, which we have an abundance of). Of course, there are all the other usual supply-and-demand nuances that are still taking shape as the production and distribution infrastructure matures here.

This latter point was the source of much anxiety once upon a time. Today, though, it seems only Navistar is expressing doubts that the supply and sales infrastructure for DEF might not be ready to meet 2010 demands.

Wanting to make sure that SCR in North America wasn't going to be trucking's version of the 'BETA cassette player,' it's

which once again carries a three-to-five-percent fuel-economy penalty.

Furthermore, DEF will be dosed at about two or three gallons (from on-board tanks ranging anywhere between six and 23 gallons, depending on the application) for every 100 gallons of diesel. With a 13-liter DEF tank, trucks will be set for 3,000 to 3,600 miles per fill-up. So although this is the first time drivers will be an active part of the emissions standard, it's not much more burdensome than "topping up windshield washer fluid tanks," as Daimler Trucks' Director of Infrastructure Development, David Uschwald, puts it.

And while packaging constraints can exist on some complicated vehicle layouts, truckmakers' creative use of chassis real estate and a variety of DEF tank



UREA! WE'VE FOUND IT

There are several online DEF outreach efforts underway.

Here's a few websites to learn more about DEF and other SCR requirements.

www.afdc.energy.gov

The US Dept of Energy is getting the word out. This is also the site that will eventually host a DEF locator tool (www.fueltools.gov) which will help truckers locate facilities selling the stuff.

www.factsaboutscr.com

Just like it sounds. Everything you want to know about DEF and SCR engines.

www.truckscr.com

A good tutorial on how SCR and DEF work together.

www.mackscr.com

Click on David McKenna's blog for invaluable information on the SCR system. You ask, and Dave answers whatever questions you have.

ROAD TO O-10

A FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE?

There are only 300 or so days left before new 2010 EPA-mandated engines are the standard in North America, but truck and engine makers are finding out they still have their work cut out in educating customers on the rules and the types of technologies that will be available. According to a recent survey by Greensboro, N.C.-based Quixote Group, a sizable proportion of carriers still don't understand what the upcoming emission regulation standards are all about and many seemingly don't have a firm grasp of the differences between selective catalytic reduction (SCR) technology and enhanced or "massive" EGR (exhaust gas recirculation).

The survey found that only 60 percent of respondents (close to 1,000 fleet people and owner-ops) were aware that NOx is the main pollutant being targeted by the '10 EPA rules. And just over a third mistakenly believe that carbon dioxide is the emission tackled.

Large-fleet managers (101 or more trucks), and maintenance people had a much better understanding of NOx's inclusion in the rule (81 percent and 73 percent respectively), while only 53 percent of

small fleets and 46 percent of owner-ops were equally aware.

When quizzed on the available technologies, a majority of respondents weren't in tune with the most notable benefits of SCR, such as fewer active regenerations (35 percent); fuel savings (39 percent), reduced particulate output (43 percent); and less engine heat rejection (37 percent). Only 25 percent of owner-ops could say SCR delivers better fuel economy, which is the main selling point for the majority of OEMs marketing that technology.

The good news for SCR suppliers, though, is that most respondents (42 percent) indicate that fuel economy is the single most important factor when considering a new truck purchase. "When given the choice of SCR with the fuel economy advantage, SCR is more popular by a ratio of three to one," said Charles Mattina, president of Quixote. However, with only eight months before the new engines hit the street, Mattina acknowledges that SCR engine makers should start ramping up their marketing departments. "You don't have a product problem," he says, "you, as was said in Cool Hand Luke, have a failure to communicate."

natural more than a few urea makers—especially smaller niche players already doing very well in the high-margin, tight-capacity fertilizer sector—chose to sit on the fence while OEMs made up their minds whether to follow in Europe's SCR footsteps.

At a recent DEF summit in San Diego, Gerry Kroon of Calgary-based urea producer, Agrium Inc., said most of his product is already spoken for in agriculture and he'll be careful before spending money to revamp plants and change logistic patterns for the DEF market. The good news, he says, is that he has some time to react to conditions on the ground. Although the emissions deadline is Jan. 1, 2010, he doesn't expect the market to be instantly flooded with SCR trucks until a year or two later. "[DEF] is an exciting product. Luckily, the [demand] will be gradual."

In the meantime, though, other producers are making their moves. Two of the

world's largest, Terra Environmental Technologies and Brenntag North America, recently announced a multi-year strategic alliance to supply the U.S. and Canada with TerraCair DEF. Cummins Filtration is among several others also preparing for wide-scale DEF production for both commercial trucks and the passenger vehicle market, which is welcoming several SCR cars and SUVs this year. "This growing demand has already contributed to the expansion of industry capacity in time for 2010," promises David Siler of Detroit Diesel.

PUMPING UP THE VOLUME

Distribution and point of sale are slightly different animals, though, with their own unique issues, particularly in Canada.

Pilot Travel Centers and Travelcenters of America are two truckstop chains in the U.S. that are leading the way in over-the-road retail, which is especially counted on

to accommodate the domicileless owner-op segment. The latter chain is committed to equipping every one of its locations with DEF pumps, while Pilot will start off with dispensers at about 100 sites. Most truckstops will at the very least offer pre-packaged, top-off or "tote" containers.

Petroleum companies are another matter. They're said to be closely observing DEF infrastructure development, but so far the extent that retail fueling stations will be involved is unknown.

That could be somewhat concerning for some short-haul LTL carriers and package deliverers that operate almost exclusively in urban areas or around airports and whose trucks hardly see the interstate. Doug Wertz, senior manager of Global Vehicles for FedEx, says that ideally it would be nice if trucks could operate on a single DEF fill-up between PM schedules. But since that isn't going to happen too often, home depot DEF fueling will be a necessary solution for many fleets, including most of FedEx's local SCR trucks, Wertz says.

Stakeholders insist such a multifaceted supply chain strategy is essential for this "chicken and egg technology." This is especially true in Canada, where some believe the lack of a vast truckstop network and dependence on unmanned cardlocks could lead to isolated DEF shortages for some rural truckers a little too north of the 49th parallel.

David McKenna isn't particularly concerned, though. As a former Torontonian, the Powertrain marketing manager for Mack Trucks says he spends a lot of time thinking what the impacts might be in Canada.

"Weather, weights, distances and isolated areas always spring to mind," he says. "What I see unfolding as EPA 2010 chassis hit the road, is that DEF is scalable, meaning that depending on the location and amount of DEF consumed, there will be a right-sized dispenser and system available."

If there's a lack of retail supply in a specific region, an individual fleet's best option is to acquire their own home depot dispensing systems, from 750-gal. Independent Bulk Containers (IBCs) to a complete ground installation—although a carrier would need to have a lot of new engines to justify the expense of the latter approach.

Also, McKenna and Siler both confirm that heavy truck franchise dealers in Canada, in particular, will sell DEF as stock material, including an abundance of 2.5-gal “tote” jugs which alone can carry a truck 800 miles). “Most of our dealers will supply exchange IBCs that a customer would order and a replacement will be shipped to that location, not unlike fuel or bulk lube oil today,” says McKenna.

Most, if not all, North American truck models will fit the DEF tank on the driver’s side, just ahead of the fuel tank. Logically, then, it’s hoped that truckstops and fuel stations install their dispensers accordingly so drivers don’t have to adjust the truck forward or backward after filling up with diesel.

That isn’t the only wrinkle fleets are urging retailers to iron out. As Michele T. Calbi, VP of Procurement and Shop Operations for Swift Transport, points out, most facilities will start out with just one dedicated DEF lane.

She urges, then, a degree of equipment redundancy and a heightened level of vigilance in making sure dispensers work properly at all times since, depending on the area, incoming truckers relying on that location as an official DEF depot may not have another option for hundreds of miles.

With likely thousands of SCR trucks in her fleet come next year, Calbi also wants to make sure that the billing process is streamlined at the point of sale. “They have to figure out billing for DEF separate from diesel,” she says. Like many carriers, she wants the two itemized separately for accounting and tax purposes, but there should only be one card swipe and transaction fee. “This is extremely important,” says Calbi.

Word from fuel retailers and truckstops is that they’re working on it.

BEYOND ‘O-10

EATON has signed an agreement to use **Clean Diesel Technologies’** patented **Advanced Reagent Injector System (ARIS)** for injection of hydrocarbon fuel in emissions reduction applications. The technology applies to the regeneration of diesel particulate filters and lean NOx traps without the use of additional urea for NOx reduction. The company says hydrocarbon injection is an important technology for DPF regeneration applications.

At last fall’s American Trucking Associations’ convention, Eaton CEO Jim Sweetnam announced that the company is working on a SCR aftertreatment system that creates its own on-board urea, limiting the need for regular fill-ups. The system will not be ready for SCR trucks hitting the market immediately in 2010, however.



PUT ‘ER THERE: Mack makes the best of DEF tank real estate on vocational trucks.

A MATTER OF ICE AND DEF

Many critics of SCR have been quick to observe that DEF can slush or “waxes” at temperatures below 12 °F, a common thermo reading on a February morning in Regina. Still, winter trucking won’t come to a halt across the Prairies, assures McKenna. Upon cold starting an engine, the engine air pre heater instantly warms some ambient air, while small heater coils at the base of the DEF tank start to thaw a miniscule amount of DEF to be used as required. “NOx is produced via very high combustion temperatures and these are not seen during cold starts,” he explains. Also, each time the key is turned off, all DEF will be pumped back to the tank so lines won’t freeze.



The American Petroleum Institute is still determining a final North American spec and quality-control regulations for commercial DEF. An industry-wide certification standard and uniform labeling requirements are expected shortly.

In order to properly meet the EPA’s NOx-fighting benchmarks, these performance specifications for DEF will be strict, however.

As was the case in Europe, there will undoubtedly be a handful of folks with a lot of time on their hands who will attempt—either for profit, sheer laziness, or to save a few pennies—to “fool” the engine with homemade DEF or other grade urea.

This “bathtub DEF,” as McKenna dubs it, isn’t a good idea. The Aftertreatment Control Module will recognize it via very sensitive NOx sensors monitoring the required flow of DEF and, depending on the degree of imbalance, the engine will go into a power derate. The same goes for DEF tanks that are allowed to run empty. Flashing monitoring system gauges (which will be generally uniform among all OEMs) will indicate DEF is low; then the engine top speed will be automatically cut down to 100 km/h, and finally a “limp home” effect of about 15 clicks kicks-in.

Of course, it should never get to that point. As McKenna asks rhetorically, “why mess with DEF in the first place? DEF economy is something around 226 miles per gallon. That’s pretty good value.” ▲

When it comes to smart trailer spec'ing, it's the little things that count. Put another way, "you can save 10 cents on a wire but burn down a trailer in doing so."

BY DEBORAH LOCKRIDGE

You Only *Flinch* Once

Finally, trailers are getting a little more respect. These days, they generally last longer and need less maintenance.

For example, new coatings and other solutions have addressed corrosion problems while tracking systems let you monitor both tethered and untethered units.

But there are also lots of little, simpler things you can do to help make your trailers last longer. Some you might not have thought of. Others could have been overlooked because you're too busy fighting day-to-day fires.

"If you spec good equipment out of the gate, over the long term your maintenance expenses are going to be a lot less," says Travis Hopkey, director of marketing for

Phillips Industries, which supplies air and electrical products.

"As we like to say, 'To pay for quality, you only have to flinch once.'"

Adds Tim Gilbert, director of fleets and heavy-duty OEMs at Peterson Manufacturing, a lighting and electrical supplier: "My advice to fleets or owner-operators is never be afraid to contact a component manufacturer to make sure you're getting the whole story on what the capabilities and the application should be. You don't necessarily have to take what the OEM is giving you. Be diligent and do your research and make sure you get the biggest bang for the buck."

Often, trailer buyers spec brakes and tires and the more expensive components on trailers, Hopkey says, "but focusing on smaller elements can really make a difference in maintenance costs."





GOING TOW TO TOW: You don't have to accept OEM specs.

For instance, sealed and modular wiring harnesses are standard now on many trailers, and if not, you should be specifying them. These harnesses keep out corrosion-causing moisture and de-icing chemicals. And if part of the wiring is damaged, for instance by a blown rear tire, part of the harness can easily be unplugged and replaced, points out Page Large, national fleet sales manager for lighting and electrical supplier Grote Industries.

Another commonly recommended spec is LED lighting, which is increasingly standard on trailers. It may cost more up front, but lasts many times longer than traditional incandescent lighting. If you're planning to keep your trailer longer than three or four years, LED lighting is a smart spec.

At the very least, Hopkey says, spec LEDs on the top rails. "Thieves typically won't climb up a ladder to steal them, and that's the one that's expensive to repair."

On flatbed trailers, the backside of lights are exposed, making them susceptible to corrosion-causing moisture and chemicals. On incandescent lights, that was addressed via a close-backed grommet. But when LEDs came along, mounted in a flange rather than a grommet, the backside was again exposed, explains Grote's Large.

"So we developed a snap-in piece a few years ago that serves the same purpose as a close-backed grommet. We developed a cup, if you will, that snaps into the backside of a flange, so you're protecting your LEDs with a protective cover."

You may be able to extend the life of your brakes and your trailer tires by specifying a quick-exhaust or quick-release gladhand, Hopkey says. "Typically, air has to escape all the way back up to the tractor," he explains. "But with a quick-release right in front of the trailer, the air can escape a lot quicker."

Too often, he says, drivers are already taking off before the brakes on the trailer have released, creating a "hop" or "bounce" of the trailer and putting more wear and tear on those brakes and flat-spotting tires.

While you're specifying gladhands, an anodized or cast-iron gladhand will last longer and be more resistant to corrosion than the less-expensive aluminum ones. In addition, a polyurethane gladhand seal will last longer than the rubber kind.

Trailers

If you're going to drop trailers, use a screen or a gladhand seal with dust flaps to keep bugs and other contaminants out of the air system. Keeping to the air system, air lines are the focus of some new corrosion-resistant developments at Sloan Transportation Products, according to Tony Prusinski, marketing and product manager. Sloan uses a salt- and moisture-resistant plating initially designed for naval ships to fight corrosion on its new MaxxDuty hose assembly. These assemblies retain their swiveling ability and ability to be disassembled even after long-term exposure to corrosive chemicals.

THE TRACTOR-TRAILER CONNECTION

Along with air, think about all the other electrical signals and information that travel back and forth between the tractor and trailer: trailer-tracking systems, stability and anti-rollover systems, tire pressure monitoring, axle-based weight info, and more. It's more important than ever to

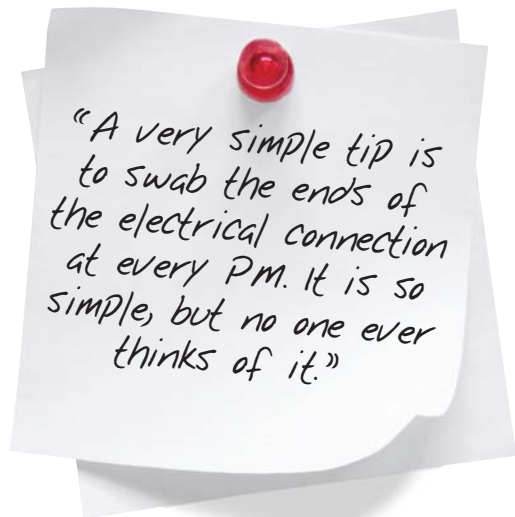
worry about that connection when spec'ing and maintaining it.

Grote, for instance, recently developed a new nose box for the front of the trailer that allows all those systems to be installed easily and efficiently. Large says it also makes maintenance easier. If you find evidence of corrosion in a connector, you can just remove and replace it with a new connector instead of installing an entire new nose box.

The tractor-trailer electrical connection gets doused with road spray, so take steps to prevent corrosion. Routine maintenance for the connector includes pulling the plugs apart, checking the connections, regreasing and plugging them back in. A very simple tip recommended by Phillips is to swab the ends of the cable at every PM.

"It's so simple, but no one ever thinks of it," Hopkey says. "If they're dropping trailers, that end gets plugged and unplugged frequently and is kind of self-cleaning. On the tractor, they'll start corroding together."

Rod Ehrlich, senior vice president/chief technology officer for Wabash National,



"A very simple tip is to swab the ends of the electrical connection at every PM. It is so simple, but no one ever thinks of it."

cautions against the common industry practice of spec'ing "split" connector pins on the trailer side. The theory is that when the connectors start to wear out, the split will allow the pin to be widened using a screwdriver so it can at least make a temporary connection.

"We try to inform the buyer that it's



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better to use a solid pin on the trailer, and when the connection doesn't make a good connection, the part that needs to be repaired is the part on the tractor," Ehrlich says. "When they spread the split brass pins on the trailer, you can only do that once or twice, and then the pin breaks—and then you're totally out of luck. That's just a poor maintenance practice."

"A lot of people don't think of electrical systems needing maintenance, but grease does dry out on you," says Peterson's Gilbert. Not all, but many electrical connections require grease, especially the seven-pin connector between the tractor and the trailer. Read the manufacturer's recommendations to see which connectors require grease, and make sure you use dielectric grease designed for electrical systems (sometimes called dielectric.)

Normal grease would have way too much water in it and cause more problems than it solves," Gilbert says. Too often, says Wabash's Ehrlich, when mechanics replace a light and discover it's corroded, they just knock off the corrosion, plug it back together and send the truck on its way. If you do this, "it will work when you put it back together, but chances are, the next time, the terminals will be disintegrated," he says.

While modular harnesses may have made it easier to repair and replace, don't take shortcuts, Large says. "We strongly recommend that you properly secure that harness back to the frame rail the way the OEM did it. We'll see shortcuts; they unplug the damaged portion of harness and plug in the replacement part, and they fail to use the proper number of wire ties to secure the harness back to the frame rail. If that harness is not properly secured to the frame rail, just the mere weight of it causes stress on the connections."

Up north, if a harness is not properly secured and a lot of ice and slush accumulates on it, it can cause a short or can even cause the harness to come unplugged.

Another shortcut to avoid is using too light a wire when adding something like an indicator light for tire inflation systems, says Wabash's Ehrlich. "We use minimum 12-gauge wire on trailers, because if it shorts out, it's heavy enough not to start a fire before it trips the circuit breaker on the tractor. So always use a

heavier gauge wire than is needed for the amperage requirements of the device."

If you don't, he says, you may save 10 cents on the wire, but you can burn the entire trailer down. Gilbert also points out a small thing that is sometimes overlooked during maintenance procedures: properly installing directional lights.

"A lot of manufacturers out there make lights that are directional, where there's a

top orientation to them," he explains. "If those get rotated in any way, you're actually running a non-compliant lamp. If there's a top marking on there, they need to make sure it's on the top. Some of these lights are getting pretty small and you have to look really close for that top marking."

And if you have to go in and troubleshoot wiring problems, do it correctly. Don't pierce the wires, which creates a

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Trailers



CONTAIN YOURSELF: There are new rules for American intermodal folks.

CHASSIS RULES

Carriers who haul container chassis' south of the 49th will soon have some new safety regs to deal with. The American Federal Motor Carrier Safety (FMCSA) recently released final regulations for the "roadability" of container chassis. As a result, according to brake-safety advocate and president of Spectra Products Inc., Andy Malion, chassis providers in the U.S. will have to ensure that their equipment's roadworthy. And drivers will have to include chassis' in pretrips.

AMONG THE REQUIREMENTS:

- Display the USDOT Number, or other unique identifier, on each intermodal container chassis offered for transportation in interstate commerce;
- Provide a means to effectively respond to driver and motor carrier reports about intermodal container chassis' mechanical defects and deficiencies; and,
- Ensure that intermodal chassis are road worthy before the equipment is made available to the driver for transport.

The regulations will go into effect six months from today.

"Up here [in Canada]," says Malion, "it's a different story. When a tractor gets hooked up to a chassis, it's deemed a combination so it's part of the pretrip."

place where corrosion-causing chemicals and moisture can get in.

"A [wiring] jacket is sort of like a hollow tube of spaghetti," Ehrlich explains. "There is air in and around the bundle of wires in a cable. Once you put a pinprick into the cable jacket, it will suck water in as it cools down. There's actually a vacuum created inside that wire, and it will pull moisture in and feed it along the wire," causing corrosion. "I've seen it run feet away from a damaged surface—not a matter of just inches."

Don't forget the inside of the trailer. Interior liners and scuffs can be spec'd to reduce damage during loading and unloading.

"Interior wall damage on both reefers

and dry freights has always been a maintenance issue," says Craig Bennett, senior vice president of sales and marketing for Utility Trailer.

"The trend recently has been to high-strength interior liners on reefer trailers, and the wear bands have been upgraded to be stronger. On a dry van trailer, the trend has been towards the high-strength steel liner."

These damage-resistant liners extend repair/replacement requirements significantly, says Ron Gordy, director of quality assurance for Great Dane, compared to the old plywood-lined sidewalls that would have to be replaced during the trailer's life. ▲

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By *Jamie Williams*
President
PeopleNet Canada

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EQUIPMENT NEWS, REVIEWS, AND MAINTENANCE TIPS



TIED UP IN BUREAUCRACY: So much for harmony. North American Cargo Securement regs have been in development since 1993, they've been in place since 2005. We still don't have universal agreement on enforcement.

Close, but No Cigar

rules & regs *Compliance with Cargo Securement standards is improving, but the same old problems continue to plague the industry. By Jim Park*

You can't get away with much when you pull a flatdeck. Unlike van drivers who can usually hide their sins behind closed doors, your skill and expertise at tying loads down is on display for all the world to see. Motorists and other drivers can cast a quick eye over your handiwork as you drive by. And who hasn't?

We've all noticed the good loads going by, wrapped so tight you could bounce a quarter off the tarp. We notice the other

ones too. Tarps billowing in the wind, loose straps, slack chains, and even boards working their way out of lumber bundles because they're not clamped down tight enough. Scarier still are the 40,000-lb steel coils with only a pair of chains keeping them in place.

Don't think for even a second that the cops don't notice this stuff, too.

The recently released Ontario Auditor General's report on enforcement efforts in that province declared "insecure loads" to

be the top mechanical out-of-service "defect" for 2007. Similarly, CVSA reports that load/cargo securement violations accounted for more than 422,000 recorded violations across North America for the same year.

That's a staggering number when you consider how remote the possibility is of getting pulled around back for an inspection. Of the 4.9 million violations noted by CVSA in 2007—in 323 categories, nearly 10 percent were load-securement related.

WHAT'S WRONG?

You'll be surprised to hear what the "Top 5" violations were. We polled CVSA (Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance) and three provinces, looking for that short list. While everyone said there really was no official list, anecdotally, no one had

In Gear

any difficulty describing the more common problems noticed by inspectors at roadside.

In Nova Scotia, for example, melt water running out of trailers hauling loads of fish contained in tote bins is of particular concern, as are dump truck loads of crushed limestone running around without dust tarps, loads of crushed cars covered with improper mesh, and improperly secured loads of modular homes.

“The problems we see tend to be location specific,” notes Don Evans, Commercial Vehicle Compliance manager with Nova Scotia’s Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. “We really notice the melt water at the scales located at the Canso Causeway, especially when my guys have to climb down into the scale pit to perform maintenance.”

John Mead of Saskatchewan’s Transport Compliance Branch told us loose material laying on the deck of the trailer or somewhere on the chassis is a real concern, as are, again, untarped dump truck loads.

“I’ve seen hammers, bars, and lots of junk and debris like big chunks of dirt or rocks from the track of a Cat, for example,” he says. “And then there are the loads of gravel that spray from dump trucks onto passing cars.”

Ontario has a broad manufacturing base, and consequently, a variety of problems in different areas of the province, notes Warren Reynolds, the Ministry of transportation’s (MTO) senior enforcement advisor and provincial training coordinator. He notes “predictable” types of violations in areas where, for example, steel hauling or logging predominate.

Reynolds also says MTO is beginning to make more observations of van trailer interiors, but isn’t taking aggressive action—yet.

“We’ve seen a few loads that demanded action, but mostly we’re just looking,” he says. “One of the worst I’ve seen was a load of steel auto parts bins loaded down the centre of the van with no blocking or securement devices of any kind to keep the bins in place. The floor was like a skat-



AVOIDING THE STRAP: Enforcement officials in most jurisdictions do conduct outreach programs and will help with driver training as well as answering specific questions about cargo securement. Find an officer who will help you out before they find you.

ing rink from all the oil dripping from the parts. You could push those bins around the trailer floor by hand. I asked the driver if he had ever had a problem with a load like this, and he said, ‘no, I just take it easy going around corners.’“

Colin Mooney, Director of Enforcement

Programs, at CVSA’s Washington, D.C., office said in addition to unsecured roll-off containers, inadequate scrap car coverings, and loose articles on the truck body, the most serious concerns stem from damaged or inadequate tiedowns and anchor points.

“I’d have to say we’ve still got some real work to do in getting operators to inspect their tiedown equipment more regularly,” Mooney says. “When you add up the number of violations stemming from inadequate or improper tiedowns, it suggests there’s still—after all these years—a great deal of misunderstanding out there.”

And that point was echoed in varying degrees by all the others too.

THE SUM OF THE PARTS

According to MTO’s Reynolds, drivers are for the most part using the correct number of tiedowns and they are putting them on properly. “But,” he notes, “often the device is damaged—even in some minor way—and that compromises not only the integrity of the tiedown, but its working load limit (WWL), which is something we check when determining the aggregate WWL of the package of tiedowns.”

For example, a length of 5/16 Grade 70 Transport chain has a WWL of 4,700 lb. If any of the links in the chain was damaged (bent, cracked, twisted, gouged, opened,

LOAD SECUREMENT CHECKLIST

Based on the handful of observations from the jurisdictions polled for this story, here’s a quick, down and dirty checklist that’s guaranteed to keep most drivers out of trouble more often than not.

- ✓ Check the trailer deck, the deck behind the cab, and the areas between the fuel tanks and the frame rails for unsecured articles such as shovels, brooms, oil jugs, chains and binders, dunnage, rocks and debris, etc. Any loose article that could fall from a truck is considered a violation.
- ✓ Do a quality audit of your cargo securement gear. Check the chains link-by-link for damage—like the inspectors do. Ensure the entire assembly meets the desired WWL; i.e., no un- or under-rated components. Inspect strapping for damage, cuts, abrasions, etc., that could compromise the integrity of the strap. Make sure all the strapping has a WWL label affixed to the strap and that the

entire assembly—including anchor points—meets the desired WWL.

- ✓ If you haul loose, light material in a dump truck, use your tarp.
- ✓ Take advantage of header boards and other structures designed to prevent forward movement of cargo when possible. If not, ensure the article of cargo has at least one extra restraining device in place, and ensure there’s *at least* one device for every 10 ft of cargo length—regardless of the weight.
- ✓ If you haul vans, examine your loading practices for possible infractions. Cargo should be secured against movement, and placed so that it cannot shift under normal circumstances. Enforcement of the cargo securement regs for van trailers is spotty at best, but more jurisdictions are becoming more interested in what’s behind closed doors. They have the authority to open up and examine even sealed trailers—including marine containers.

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In Gear

etc.) that chain's WWL as calculated by the inspectors would automatically be downgraded to zero. In addition, if a component of the chain assembly, say the grabhook, were not the same grade as the chain, or if the grade could not be determined, the entire assembly would be downgraded to what they call Grade 30 Proof Coil, which has a WWL of only 1,300 lb.

If an article of cargo requires two chains with a 4,700-lb WWL, and one was damaged or unrated, the aggregate WWL of the tiedown assembly would be reduced accordingly. You now have an insecure load—and a ticket.

The same thinking applies to webbed strapping, although the outcome in this case is less precise and subject to more interpretation. For example, most juris-

dictions will permit cuts or damage in 4-in. webbed strapping totaling up to 3/4 in. If more than one cut exists, the sum of the cuts is applied. Anything exceeding 3/4 in. anywhere along the length of the strap would zero it out, which could compromise the aggregate WWL of the tiedowns used on an article of cargo.

Knotted straps are not permitted, and have a WWL of zero. Strapping that "appears" to be worn out due to age and exposure, or straps that have been repaired are presently under scrutiny. Inspectors are suspicious of some of the rattier looking straps, but so far have no grounds to disqualify them—unless they're damaged.

Ralph Abato, director of sales and marketing at Ankra International—a leading webbed strapping supplier—says there is a proposal on the table at the Web Sling & Tie Down Association that would set standards for web quality, stitching patterns, and general physical condition requirements for webbed straps. WSTDA is currently preparing to do widespread testing to determine empirically just what degradation there is from UV rays, and cuts and abrasion at certain levels.

CROSS-BORDER CONUNDRUM: Allowing strapping to run outside the rub rail is now permitted by the U.S. Federal regs. Some Canadian jurisdictions are still on the fence and do not permit this.



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“We need this testing to support our claim that any damage is significant,” Abato says. “To quantify by arbitrary dimensions as CVSA does now, is without support. The association is hard pressed to support the CVSA’s Out of Service Criteria for damaged straps.”

Abato also cautions that repairing damaged strapping is not a good idea.

“No repairs to webbing can be deemed safe,” he claims. “If it looks old and worn, it probably is. You would be surprised how badly deteriorated straps can become with little damage or cuts. It’s best to err on the side of safety and replace old-looking or damaged cargo straps.”

WSTDA is proposing a ban on repaired straps.

While there are dozens of separate requirements, one could easily run afoul of the North American Cargo Securement Standard Model Regulations—and dozens more where local interpretations differ from the North American standard—the non-cargo-specific errors drivers make are relatively easy to fix. Expensive and time-consuming in some cases, but solutions to what officials told

us are the common problems aren’t rocket science—except maybe what to do about leaking fish juice, but that too is a cargo-securement issue.

Several publications are available as training aids and resources for drivers. Some are free, some come at a modest price, but even a single violation would be 10 times the cost of the most expensive book we could find. ▲

FOR MORE INFO

CARGO SECUREMENT RESOURCES

- www.ancra.com/truck/regs.asp
- www.practicalcargosecurement.com/
- www.fmcsa.dot.gov/rules-regulations/truck/vehicle/cs.htm
- www.kinedynecanada.com
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PAYBACK TIME: Doug Cannon bills himself as “Canada’s Bounty Hunter” but he’s not shy about sharing his collection tips.



Cannonballs

debt collector *A small-business down’n’dirty guide to collecting no-hope receivables. By David Menzies*

It’s a trucker’s worst nightmare: you deliver the goods safe and sound and in a timely fashion only to discover the customer has no intention of paying up.

Yes, you can chase after a debtor via the courts. But this is typically a lengthy and costly process. What’s more, winning a court case merely awards the victorious plaintiff a judgment—not the money.

Doug Cannon, who bills himself as “Canada’s financial bounty hunter”, has learned a trick or three in the decades he’s spent tracking down debtors. Cannon, the founder of Brampton, Ont.-based Cando Credit Consulting (candocreditconsulting.org) says the secret to debt-recovery boils down to being a “pest ... you need to get under their [debtors] skin and find out why they’re not paying.”

Cannon will go to great lengths to be a pest. Case in point: a few years ago, Cannon discovered a debtor he was hired

to track down was a member of a private golf course. Cannon got himself invited to the club and made a beeline for the debtor’s foursome. Brandishing a megaphone, Cannon went into broadcast mode: “Did you pay your caddy yet or are you going to stiff him like you stiffed my client?” asked Cannon via megaphone.

The mortified debtor quickly made arrangements to settle his account.

While brandishing a megaphone on the putting green might be a tad extreme for most truckers who simply want to get paid, Cannon says there are more subtle tactics that tend to pay dividends when it comes to convincing debtors to pony up.

1 NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF EMBARRASSMENT

Cannon recommends finding out where the debtor lives and then pay a visit. Simply ask, “Where’s my money?”

“You can’t do anything illegal, but don’t believe the check’s in the mail,” he says.

Cannon says you must tell the debtor you plan on contacting everyone he’s associated with—from customers to friends and relatives—in order to ask if any of them have been stiffed as well.

“Some people are very concerned about their public image,” says Cannon, noting many debtors will pay up simply to avoid a public relations black eye.

Should the debtor refuse to pay up, Cannon says you must follow through on your pledge.

2 CALL THE SPOUSE

Although the debtor might be a no-good charlatan, don’t assume everyone in his family has knowledge of his shady business practices. Indeed, Cannon says often the spouse is clueless about the debtor’s shenanigans and a polite phone call to the debtor’s spouse can pay dividends.

“When she finds out the truth, she’ll be embarrassed and angry,” says Cannon.

In many cases, the spouse will demand the matter get resolved. Better yet, a spouse can do what you can’t: nag the debtor on a 24/7 basis.

3 GENERATE PUBLICITY

As the saying goes, "It pays to advertise." A favorite tactic of Cannon is distributing flyers summarizing the debtor's misdeeds near the debtor's workplace or residence. Don't go on private property; instead, Cannon says you should put flyers under the windshield wipers of cars parked on public roads and affix flyers to hydro polls. Get the flyers printed on bright yellow paper stock festooned with dollar signs. Keep the message civil, factual and brief, such as: "Dear X: Please pay the outstanding debt."

4 FILE A SMALL CLAIMS LAWSUIT AND SERVE THE DEBTOR AT HIS WORK-PLACE OR PLACE OF WORSHIP

Even if you have no intention of pursuing the matter in court given a judgment will likely be ignored, Cannon says one trick is to spend \$75 and file a claim anyway. The reason? So you can serve the statement of claim to the debtor at his business or, better yet, at his place of worship.

Doing so will achieve two purposes: the debtor will suffer "loss of face" amongst his peers. And by filing a statement of claim, you've indicated you're serious about pursuing the matter.

5 WORD OF MOUTH

Once you've found out where the debtor lives, use the reverse address function on Canada411.com to retrieve the phone numbers of his neighbors. Phone the neighbors in an apologetic way, explaining you've tired with little success to get in touch with the debtor "regarding an urgent matter." Ask the neighbor if he or she would be so kind to call or visit the debtor to pass along a message to call.

6 CONTACT THE DEBTOR'S SUPPLIERS

Try to find out who the debtor's suppliers are and then tell them your tale of woe. In addition to a blemished reputation, the debtor might just find that his suppliers aren't too gung-ho to extend credit anymore. And he may want to settle before you start calling additional suppliers, which would further inconvenience him.

7 Hire Doug Cannon

If you don't have the time or the intestinal fortitude to employ the above methods, hiring "Canada's Financial Bounty Hunter" can indeed pay dividends. Since Cannon is not officially a debt collector, he can use methods and techniques that regulated debt collectors are forbidden to embrace. Specializing in claims of more

than \$10,000, Cannon's fee is a percentage of the outstanding debt. And he claims to have an exceptional success rate in "reuniting" creditors with their cash. ▲

FOR MORE INFO 

www.candocreditconsulting.org




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\$20,000 Worth of Mudflaps

tech tips *If that's what it takes to save fuel, so be it. And other ways to cut your costs. By Peter Carter*

Rosemary Andersen of Anderson Flaps says she was as surprised as anybody to learn that their "EcoFlaps" actually conserve fuel.

She knew they cut down splash and spray and make driving safer generally, but to actually cut diesel consumption? "Who would have thought that mud flaps flapping around would have caused so much wind resistance?" she told *Today's Trucking*.

"Turns out," she says "it's huge."

The thing is, EcoFlaps are perforated so they don't flop around. And that's one of the reasons they don't splash much. But some recent lab tests proved that they improve mileage, considerably, so the Andersens are making a flap about the discovery.

They've also just signed on a Canadian distributor for the product.

Here's the dirt on the flap's fuel-saving properties. In 2006, the Transportation Research Center Inc. (TRC) performed SAE Test J1321 Type II on the Andersen flaps. The results are on the EcoFlap website (www.ecoflaps.com).

The baseline fuel economy for the two test trucks was 6.37 mpg and 6.54 mpg. With the flaps installed, the mpg increased to 6.71 mpg and 6.77 mpg respectively. According to the company website: "The patented airflow design of EcoFlaps saves an average of \$1,500 in fuel per year for individual trucks, which translates to super savings for you and our environment."

Are we buying the story? We're not sure but we wouldn't be the first. For one thing they're flipping off the shelves. Andersen's building not one, but two new production facilities for the things. Also, the American carrier Arctic Express just ordered \$20,000 worth. Did you see that? \$20,000 worth of mudflaps?

An article in *Business First* magazine quoted Arctic's CEO Richard Durst thusly: "With fuel at \$4.70 a gallon, these were worth another look."

Durst was flap shopping last summer; and fuel has since dropped by more than half since then. But as recently as this past August, fuel prices soared so high they eclipsed labor as the biggest cost of doing business.

That was then. That was when Prius' were jumping off the shelves and people were parking their Escalades. Now, diesel prices are down and frankly, it's hard to get pumped about saving fuel.

It shouldn't be that way, argues Jack Lee, the president and CEO of Vancouver-based fuel consultants 4ReFuel Inc. "A reliable fuel management system can save

We do the heavy lifting to



Francois Bourbeau
Senior Territory Manager
Canadian Region



you up to 20 percent on your fuel costs," he says. "So no matter what fuel prices do, you can always exert more control over your fuel costs."

A GAME OF NUMBERS

So you've invested in some fuel-saving gadget and put your drivers on a bonus and you want to prove to the boss that it's working. Be careful you don't compare apples to kumquats.

When you're trying to determine miles

per gallon, especially when you're measuring yours against the other guys', be very cautious, warns the Technology & Maintenance Council (TMC) of the American Trucking Associations. "Even the smallest oversight can result in large errors."

Says TMC: "A five-percent initial-fill fueling recording error of a class 8 truck can invalidate consumption comparisons between units for a year or more." That means if you make a five-percent error once, it'll throw off your calculations

HIDDEN GEMS: It's hard to predict where fuel-savings will come from.

for a whole year.

TMC lists a dozen other simple mistakes that can make your in-house fuel comparisons meaningless. Specifically, know whether you're trying to decrease your fuel consumption or increase your miles per gallon (mpg). There's a considerable difference.

Percentage fuel savings does not equal percentage improvement in mpg. A one-percent fuel saving will be measured as a 1.01-percent mpg improvement. That difference seems small, right? A ten-percent fuel savings will register as an 11.11-percent improvement in mileage.

Of course, the bigger you are, the more you stand to gain. If you purchase \$100,000 worth of fuel every year and invest in some technology or practice that yields a one-percent improvement in economy, you'll save \$1,000. On the other hand, if you buy \$1 million a year and save a single percent, you're talking \$100 grand. ▲

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MULTIPLXED PETE

NEW INSTRUMENTATION AND
DRIVER INFO CENTER ON MODEL 387



Peterbilt's Model 387

PETERBILT'S Model 387 tractor has been enhanced with new standard multiplex instrumentation and the addition of a "state of the art" driver information center. Drivers now get real-time information to improve the truck's fuel efficiency, performance and serviceability.

There are new stylized instrumentation and rocker switches, plus LED-backlit gauges, switches and controls. A new multi-functional turn stalk integrates commonly used functions, such as flash-to-pass and wiper controls, into one location.

Wiring has been simplified by color-coding and numbering, and reliability has been improved through the addition of positive locking connectors at the critical connections, says Pete.

The enhanced functionality of the information center provides drivers with access to critical vehicle performance data via the system display, so they can easily monitor the engine and transmission and adjust their driving to optimize fuel economy and performance. Fault codes have been replaced by easy-to-understand text-based readouts for faster and more accurate diagnostics,

all controlled by a menu control switch for display navigation. Other features include an integrated clock with alarm, an automatic transmission display, and an optional controlled idle timer. The system is also equipped with the ability to change language—English, Spanish, and French.

The new electrical system is supported by Peterbilt's Electronic Service Analyst (ESA), a computer-based diagnostic tool that monitors the electrical system, isolates sensors and gauges, and maintains an event log for historical purposes.

See www.peterbilt.com

QUIETER REEFERS

IMPELLER IMPROVEMENTS

Carrier Transicold has introduced a new and technologically advanced condenser impeller for X2 trailer units.

Carrier Transicold's X2 series trailer refrigeration units are now among the quietest on the market, the company says, thanks to the coupling of the new V-Force fan with the new Stealth 2 option.

Said to be seven decibels quieter than the traditional condenser fan it replaces,



the V-Force fan is now a standard feature on all X2 series units. It's engineered with vortex-suppression tips that virtually eliminate spinning pockets of recirculating air that result in inefficiency and noise. In addition, the new fan minimizes pulsations through fan drive-system components that can result in additional noise and component wear, Carrier says.

For system cooling, particularly in high-ambient operations, the V-Force fan is said to deliver eight-percent more air flow to the radiator and condenser than a conventional condenser fan. A cooler condenser also helps keep down compressor head pressures, reducing the power needed to operate the compressor for both better fuel economy and longer compressor life. With half the weight of the old-style fan, the V-Force fan puts less stress on the fan shaft, bearings, seals and other drive components.

For customers with particularly noise-sensitive applications such as urban delivery, the Stealth 2 noise-abatement option offers additional sound reduction. It takes technology from Carrier's

original Stealth package and adds a tuned intake system to the diesel engine, further enhancing noise suppression and sound quality.

The tuned intake system uses a high-capacity noise-suppressing air cleaner and a Helmholtz resonator, an acoustically engineered chamber that captures and dissipates targeted sound waves before they propagate away from the refrigeration unit. The tuned intake system achieves a 30-decibel sound reduction for certain frequencies.

The tuned intake system targets low-frequency rumbling noises that travel longer distances, wavelengths that cause concerns with neighbors in residential areas near distribution centers or when drivers make urban deliveries.

See www.trucktrailer.carrier.com

QUICK-CONNECT CABLES

PHILLIPS ADDS QCP OPTION ON ALL ELECTRICAL CABLES

Phillips Industries has expanded its line of Quick-Connect Plug (QCP) assemblies by offering them as an option on all electrical cables. Using them, changing a plug is cut from 20 minutes down to less than two minutes, the maker says, allowing a fleet to save the cost of an additional electrical assembly. The plug is easily removed and replaced with a new corrosion-resistant QCP cartridge. And for quick on-road repairs, extra QCP cartridges can be stored on-board.



Phillips Industries Quick-Connect Plug

The QCP has previously only been offered with the top-of-the-line ABS Lectracoil jacketing. Now the option is available on ABS Permacoil and Permacoil cables.

Phillips says the QCP cartridge is field-repaired in seconds and sealed for corrosion protection to last longer than standard assemblies.

See www.phillipsind.com

PREVENT FUEL THEFT

PACCAR PARTS OFFERS AN AFTERMARKET ANTI-SIPHON DEVICE TO PREVENT FUEL THEFT

Paccar Parts says its ACRAFIT anti-siphon device has a patented design that ensures maximum security, easy installation, and rapid fueling. Installed in the neck of the fuel tank, its one-piece construction, with openings no larger than a quarter inch, keeps thieves from reaching the diesel fuel with large-



diameter siphon tubes. The device features a tamper-resistant heavy metal barrier that's a quarter of an inch thick.

The anti-siphon line includes various sizes to fit all major OEM fuel tanks and comes with a 10-year unlimited mileage warranty.

Paccar Parts notes that five gallons of diesel fuel can be siphoned from a fuel tank in just 90 seconds, making large trucks lucrative targets.

ACRAFIT is a licensed Paccar brand of replacement parts sold at Kenworth and Peterbilt dealers in North America.

See www.acrafittruckparts.com

LOAD-BASED SHIFTING

ALLISON AUTOMATICS FOR 2009 FEATURE NEW SHIFT LOGIC TO OPTIMIZE ECONOMY AND PERFORMANCE

Allison Transmission has rolled out the new Load-Based Shift Scheduling (LBSS) feature for 2009 Allison 1000/2000/3000/4000 Series models, available now.

LBSS automatically selects between economy and performance shift schedules based on the vehicle's actual payload and the grade on which it's operating. This optimizes fuel economy while maintaining productivity, says Allison, even during heavily loaded situations.

Using advanced algorithms to calculate real-time vehicle load and grade, LBSS is calibrated to primarily use the economy mode, but automatically selects the performance mode when conditions require it. LBSS is part of the standard Shift Energy Management (SEM) calibration for approved engines.

See www.allisontransmission.com

CANNED MESSAGING

NAVMAN WIRELESS OFFERS A MESSAGING TOOL WITH ITS VEHICLE TRACKING AND LOGISTICS SOFTWARE

Navman Wireless North America has added canned-message functionality to its vehicle tracking and logistics software, OnlineAVL2. It allows fleet managers to create a library of standard messages that make sense specifically for their businesses, thus providing team members with a quick way to deliver clear messages with only a few key selections. The new feature is an added enhancement to Navman Wireless' real-time vehicle position, integrated maintenance modules and software that provides mileage reporting, automated e-mail reporting, monitoring alerts, and high-resolution satellite imagery capabilities.

Manager-selected canned messages provide a seamless response template for accurate disclosure, says Navman. Managers can create up to 100 custom messages relevant to their business. Messages are wirelessly programmed onto the M-Nav integrated messaging and navigation device, and Mobile Data

Terminal (MDT) for drivers to use. Canned messages provide time-stamped documentation that managers can later access in reports.

The complete fleet-management offering, including OnlineAVL2, is priced from a dollar per day, the company says. The new canned messaging function is available in new purchases and is accessible immediately to current Navman Wireless customers at no charge as a free upgrade request or during the next scheduled automatic software update.

See www.navmanwireless.com

UPGRADED NOTEBOOKS

PANASONIC'S NEW 3G-READY TOUGHBOOK F8 ALLOWS SEAMLESS GLOBAL ACCESS TO MOBILE BROADBAND NETWORKS

Panasonic Computer Solutions Company has introduced the thin and light Toughbook F8 notebook computer and upgrades to the tablet alternative T8 and the ultraportable W8. The 8 Series will also include the Gobi 3G mobile broadband (WWAN) solution from Qualcomm Inc. that allows connection

to high-speed mobile Internet services offered virtually anywhere in the world.

The new Toughbook F8 is said to be the world's lightest 3G-ready notebook with a 14.1-in. wide display and an internal optical drive. Weighing 3.7 lb, it has an integrated handle for maximum portability, along with the Intel Core 2 Duo processor, up to 4GB of RAM, bright widescreen LCD, and a 160GB shock-mounted hard drive. Like all others in the line, it has a strong magnesium alloy case and chassis, shock-mounted hard drive and LCD, plus spill-resistant keyboard. There's also a three-year warranty and an around-the-clock U.S.-based support team.



The 8 Series products offer a range of embedded wireless options, including 802.11a/b/g/draft-n and Bluetooth 2.0. The 8 Series will ship with optional embedded Gobi 3G technology. Gobi-enabled products allow seamless selection between mobile broadband carriers

Today's Trucking Forum



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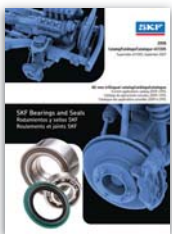
and simplified international roaming within a single embedded device. The Toughbook 8 Series will be certified on all major networks worldwide, allowing users to stay connected regardless of network availability in their current location and whether the network is using CDMA2000 EV-DO or HSPA/UMTS/GPRS technologies.

The 8 Series Panasonic Toughbook notebooks are available now at an estimated base street price of US\$2099 (W8 and T8) and US\$2499 (F8).

See www.panasonic.com/toughbook

BEARINGS, SEALS

SKF'S NEW CATALOG FOR LIGHT/MEDIUM-DUTY APPLICATIONS **SKF** recently released an all new Passenger Car, Light and Medium Truck Application Catalog (2009-1991). It



features information pages in English, French and Spanish divided into three, color-coded sections. It includes updated hub-unit images and 24 new hub-unit part numbers.

The catalog features new and updated coverage for 2009 vehicles, and a pullout, hard card for easy ordering of the SKF Automotive and Heavy Duty E-Catalog CD. Order product number 457205.

See www.vsm.skf.com

LIGHTER AIR DISC

NEW HALDEX MODULX DB22LT IS OFFERED ON HENDRICKSON AXLES With a 37-lb-weight advantage over the previous model, the **Haldex** ModulX DB22LT disc brake is now available on Hendrickson axles. The brake slides on four stainless-steel slide pins, said to provide a more compact, stable design than the standard two-pin type. These pins increase corrosion resistance and need no lubrication. Two tappets distribute brake pad clamping force equally to ensure even wear, Haldex says, which should mean longer service life and lower maintenance costs.

The DB22LT is engineered specifically for common heavy-duty applications, outperforming standard S-cam drum brakes in practically every category. Like

other air discs, it's less sensitive to speed and temperature variation common in any extreme grade or demanding brake application, so it provides more consistent performance. There's also less brake fade and more consistent pedal pressure.

See www.haldex.com

COLUMN LIFT

ROTARY'S MACH 4 SOLD IN SETS OF FOUR OR SIX COLUMNS

The new Mach 4 mobile column lift from **Rotary Lift** is said to feature especially quick setup, and quick lifting as well. The company actually claims a productivity improvement of more than 30 percent, which equates to an annual saving of \$7,604 based on an hourly technician rate of \$60. Further, it requires virtually no maintenance, Rotary says.

The Mach 4 is sold in sets of four or six battery-operated columns. Each column has a rated capacity of 18,000 lb. The lift can raise a vehicle 70 in. in just 78 seconds, according to Rotary, and it can be used to service vehicles from classes 1 through 8, plus material-handling vehicles with optional adapters.

Each Mach 4 column is powered by two deep-cycle marine batteries and is



equipped with an onboard waterproof Minn Kota charger. It can be used anywhere in the shop—including wash bays as well as outside. Its hydraulic cylinder is positioned to protect its chrome piston rod from debris and damage at all times.

The Mach 4's proprietary horseshoe wiring layout offers both quick setup and convenience. The Mach 4 connects the columns using just three communication cables, not four, forming a horseshoe shape that leaves the front or back of the lift open. This layout enables technicians to drive trucks in and out of the bay area

Retail Diesel Price Watch

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WEEKLY PUMP PRICE SURVEY / cents per litre

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CITY	Price	(+/-) Previous Week	Excl. Taxes
WHITEHORSE	103.9		87.8
VANCOUVER *	94.8	0.4	62.6
VICTORIA	96.9	-0.8	67.1
PRINCE GEORGE	92.4	-0.2	66.3
KAMLOOPS	93.5	-1.4	67.4
KELOWNA	96.9	1.0	70.6
FORT ST. JOHN	104.9	-3.0	78.2
YELLOWKNIFE	113.9		95.4
CALGARY *	87.2	-0.3	70.1
RED DEER	92.4		75.0
EDMONTON	85.1	-0.1	68.0
LETHBRIDGE	87.2		70.1
LLOYDMINSTER	85.9		68.8
REGINA *	87.9	-1.8	64.7
SASKATOON	90.1	0.6	66.8
PRINCE ALBERT	89.9		66.6
WINNIPEG *	91.5	-1.8	71.6
BRANDON	86.9		67.3
TORONTO *	90.2	2.3	67.6
OTTAWA	89.6		67.0
KINGSTON	88.6	-1.7	66.0
PETERBOROUGH	90.9		68.3
WINDSOR	86.5	-0.4	64.1
LONDON	85.2	-2.3	62.8
SUDBURY	95.9	5.0	73.0
SAULT STE MARIE	92.9	-5.0	70.2
THUNDER BAY	97.7	-0.3	74.8
NORTH BAY	87.9		65.4
TIMMINS	95.9	0.3	73.0
HAMILTON	88.5	-0.5	66.0
ST. CATHARINES	86.2	-0.8	63.7
MONTRÉAL *	97.6	0.7	66.2
QUÉBEC	96.9	-0.2	65.6
SHERBROOKE	96.9		65.6
GASPÉ	97.9		66.5
CHICOUTIMI	95.4		64.3
RIMOUSKI	97.4	-2.5	64.3
TROIS RIVIÈRES	98.9		64.3
DRUMMONDVILLE	95.9		64.3
VAL D'OR	100.4	5.5	64.3
SAINT JOHN *	88.4	-5.6	57.3
FREDERICTON	89.5	-5.2	58.3
MONCTON	90.3	-4.1	59.0
BATHURST	91.9	-4.1	60.4
EDMUNDSTON	92.3	-1.4	60.8
MIRAMICHI	90.7	-5.1	59.4
CAMPBELLTON	91.9	-4.1	60.4
SUSSEX	87.3	-4.9	56.4
WOODSTOCK		-4.0	
HALIFAX *	84.8	2.4	55.7
SYDNEY	88.1	0.9	58.5
YARMOUTH	86.0	1.1	56.7
TRURO	85.5	1.6	56.3
KENTVILLE	85.9	1.6	56.6
NEW GLASGOW	87.2	1.0	57.8
CHARLOTTETOWN *	88.7	-4.2	61.3
ST. JOHN'S *	90.4	-6.3	59.5
GANDER	86.9	-6.3	56.4
LABRADOR CITY	97.7	-6.3	66.0
CORNER BROOK	89.1	-6.3	58.3
CANADA AVERAGE (V)	90.8	0.2	66.4

V-Volume Weighted

(+/-) indicates price variations from previous week.

Diesel includes both full-serve and self-serve prices.

The Canada average price is based on the relative weights of 10 cities (*)

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In Gear

without wasting time disconnecting and reconnecting cables. The cables are also located up and out of the way, instead of on the ground. At the end of the day, a quick tug on each disconnected cable automatically rewinds it into a built-in cord reel, Rotary says. As well, each of the Mach 4's columns is identical, so a technician can control the entire lift while



standing at the most convenient column.

The patent-pending control panel on each column features a graphic layout of the column setup, a live height reading, battery indicator, programmable height-limit settings, and one-touch controls. A slow-lowering function allows for precise vehicle positioning. Lifting and lowering of all columns is automatically synchronized.

In terms of safety, the Mach 4 has locking mechanisms every three inches and a lower-to-lock function for those technicians who prefer the additional peace of mind that comes from knowing that the vehicle weight is resting on the lift's mechanical locks.

See www.rotarylift.com

CRANKING CART

CANTEC SYSTEMS OFFERS JUMP-START CART POWERED BY A CAPACITOR

Ottawa's **Cantec Systems** offers a portable jump-start cart that's powered by the company's own Can-Crank capacitor. It can be fully recharged from its own internal battery, so it can be used in remote applications where there's no readily available service vehicle or other power source. That full recharge takes less than a minute even from depleted on-board vehicle batteries.

The cart is said to have more power than four group-31 batteries, and can crank a dead vehicle's engine repeatedly to higher rpm much quicker than batteries. Connection to the disabled vehicle is done by jaw clamps or a quick-disconnect plug.

The cart is available in 12- and 24-volt models, weighing 140 and 170 lb respectively. It's 48 in. high, 20 wide and 26 deep. The capacitor is in an epoxy resin sealed case to protect from corrosion

and it does not vent or leak because it's without free liquid electrolyte, making it suitable in places with strict safety and environmental requirements. It's also maintenance free, Cantec says, and its operating-temperature range is from minus-45 to plus-50 C.

See www.cantecsystems.com

LEVEL-RIDE LIFTGATE

MBB INTERLIFT OFFERS THE LARGE-PLATFORM ILT TWIN FOLD LIFTGATE

MBB Interlift recently introduced the ILT Twin Fold liftgate. This new large-platform, level-ride model was designed for easy operation and to decrease maintenance costs, the company says. It's aimed at customers in a wide range of applications from beverage/food distribution to nursery, plus rental fleets wanting large platform folding lifts for their perceived safety and versatility.

The liftgate is equipped with torsion springs and an adjustable roller to assist with folding and unfolding the unit. The steel/aluminum platform measures 63 x 86 in. and is designed for both 96- and 102-in.-wide trucks. Its lifting capacity is up to 4,000 lb and the bed-height range is



47 to 55 in. The liftgate's large, low incline, level-ride platform, flush-mounted hinges, and optional cart stops are ideal for wheeled pallet and cart operations, the manufacturer says.

The liftgate features a thermo-protected, slide-in power pack that's fully enclosed in the mount tube and is said to be easy to inspect. Protected from the elements, the power pack is pre-mounted and is shipped with multi-temp hydraulic fluid.

The ILT's low overall weight will help increase payload and decrease fuel consumption, says MBB Interlift, the North American sales and marketing operation of Germany's MBB Palfinger. In addition to cart stops, additional options include a handheld remote and extra-heavy-duty trailer dock bumpers. An all aluminum platform will be available in the future.

See www.interlift.net ▲

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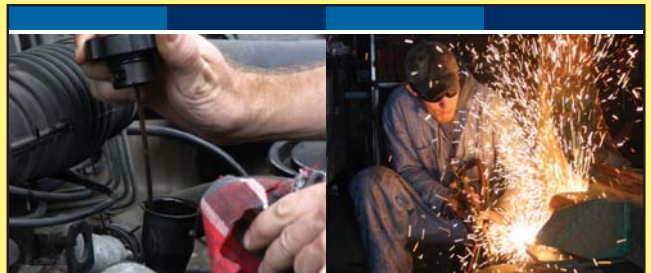
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By Peter Carter

Getting Schooled

Driving coaches is one thing; listening to them quite another

We all have our prejudices. And they aren't all of the racial variety. I, for example, grew up thinking school buses were for wusses.

I'm not talking about riding on the long yellow vehicles. Or building them.

I'm talking about operating school bus routes, the kind that have the buses operating for, say, 90 minutes twice a day, with part-time drivers. That's what I was prejudiced against.

Here's why: For almost 40 years, my dad, Tom, and his brother Ed operated a bus fleet in the Northern Ontario mining community of Sudbury.

Their primary routes involved taking miners and smelter workers from the city core out to the shafts, pits, processing plants and smaller settlements, on the perimeter of the community.

As the local economy expanded, so did the Carter Bros.' business until finally, it became the unofficial City of Sudbury transit system. We carried everybody who needed a ride, anywhere, through all kinds of weather and for all sorts of reasons. (Sleazy p.s.: Dad once said that of all the people he carried, the only ones who ever tipped the driver were the hookers. Go figure.)

Then one day, Sudbury City Council decided the area needed its own government-run system, and that, pretty much, was that.

The Carter Bros' much-sweated-over bus legacy began its final wind down.

Oh. I almost forgot.

The only runs we never operated were school routes.

The Carters never bid on or had school-bus contracts, even though they were publicly financed and predictable.

Instead, Tom and Ed relied on the free market, individual fares and local freight to pay the bills.

Dad and Ed were farmers at heart and didn't go down the school-bus route because most of the time, school equipment was highly specialized and sitting idle; and it went against their farmer grain to have equipment not working.

If the wheels weren't turning, the bus wasn't earning.

I grew up believing that.

And I was dead wrong.

Proof's easy to find. Several of the guys who did have school-bus runs back then are still doing a booming business in Sudbury. And the Carters have long left the bus game albeit reluctantly.

Last week, I emailed my friend Rob Ward of London, Ont.-based Voyageur Transportation.

Voyageur, another family outfit started by the Ferguson family back in '79, now has more than 500 people taking care of five operating divisions, including LTL but also ambulances, limos, and yes, school buses.

"Rob," I wrote, "howzzit goin'?"

"Business here," he replied, "is a little slow but not too bad; it's to be expected this time of year but due to our diversification of

Voyageur and the other areas that we're involved in, we are still very strong as a company overall. Areas like the Patient Transfer Business and the School Bus and Paratrans are pretty much recession-proof.

"Kids will continue to go to school and people will continue to go to hospitals."

Seen in the rear-view mirror of experience, it's obvious to me that Tom and Ed would have been served well by taking on a few school runs, even though it meant having a lot of buses sitting idle much of the time.

But back then? We knew better.

I can also see in that same mirror how hard it would be to take a business decision that runs counter to everything you stand for. Or grew up with.

I could just imagine somebody coming along away back and suggesting to Tom and Ed that they take some equipment off the

road awhile because business is slow.

And rather than increase capacity, maybe it would be worthwhile to keep rates at a reasonable, profitable, height, and space limited.

Imagine backing your iron up to the fence and leaving it there until times got better. Willingly.

No, the wheels might not be turning, but in a strange way that might be hard to figure out at first, they could still be earning.

The more I think about our family stance on school buses, the more I understand what it takes to make a business succeed.

They don't call them school buses for nothing. ▲



WARNING: Object lessons in the mirror are more relevant than you think.

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